

A  
TREATISE  
CONCERNING THE  
LAWFULL SVBIECT  
OF BAPTISME.

*Wherein are handled these Particulars ;*

The Baptizing of *Infants* confuted ; and the Grounds to prove the same answered.

The Covenant God made with *Abraham* and his seed handled, & how the same agrees with the Gentiles & their seed.

The Baptisme administred by an Antichristian Power confuted, as no Ordinance of God, and the Grounds to prove the same answered.

If either Church, or Ordinance be wanting, where they are to be found, and how recovered.

The Covenant and not Baptisme formes the Church, and the manner how.

There is no succession under the New Testament, but what is spiritually by faith in the Word of God.

With some other things examined, and briefly discoursed.

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By me J. S.

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*Go teach all Nations, Baptizing them, Mat. 28. 19.*

*He that beleeves, and is baptized, shall be saved, Mark. 16. 16.*

*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, 1 Cor. 12. 13.*

*Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good, 1 Thes. 5. 21.*

*Lord God the strength of my salvation, cover thou my head in the day of battell,*  
*Psal. 140. 7.*

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# The Epistle to the Reader.



*Christian Reader, have a favourable construction of my so bold attempt, of so great a worke, upon such weak abilities, which may possibly seeme to favour as deeply of pride to some, as Davids undertaking the challenge of Goliath did to his brother Eliab, 1 Sam 17. 38. But I am contented to walke naked before the world, and to undergoe the censure of men, to performe any service to God, or his people.*

The occasion that pressed me on chiefly to this worke, was by reason of some godly persons, whose consciences were scrupled about the baptizing of children before they came to know what they doe in the same; and others coming to heare of it, did much insults upon them, in a reproachfull manner, with much reviling and despising of them; as I understood by a Letter received from them; and did as it were make a challenge upon them, with certaine Reasons and Arguments, gathered up against them. Upon which occasion the said Reasons and Arguments were sent to me from beyond the Seas to be answered, and pressed me with Letter after Letter to the same, which at length I intended to doe, onely in a private way, untill some here at home had published their evill affections in a reproachfull manner; casting such unseemly aspersions upon the truth of God, and godly persons for the truths sake, to make the same hatefull in the eyes of all men, in what them lieth. And others also in resemblance of the truth, going on in such a confused way, both in respect of corrupt doctrine, and as bad order; by reason of which disorder, the blessed name of God, and his holy truth are exposed unto much suffering. And thus the glory of God, and the honour of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, lying as it were at the stake; and his people grieving and suffering together with the same, I thought in such a case that I was bound in conscience to come forth to the helpe of the Lord against the mightie; and to free my selfe from the sinne of withholding the truth in unrighteousnesse; and according to that ability Christ hath given, to speake a word in the defence of his blessed truth, against those ungodly aspersions cast upon the same.

And thus having shewed my courteous Reader, the grounds forcing me to attempt so great a worke with so weak means, I trust he will sparingly consider, rather then rashly censure, as the manner of too many is. And to judge as he would be judged, remembering there is a righteous Judge, before whom we must all appeare, and give account every one for himselfe, as Rom. 14. 10. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. The subject controverted in the following Treatise, one part of it is about Infants Baptisme. And whereas I oppose the same as an unwritten tradition, yet I would not be understood that I oppose Infants, in respect of either their persons, or age, or salvation it selfe, between God and them invisibly, but honour them with all natural respects, desiring their safety and well-being here, and glory hereafter; but what their estate is in respect of grace, that I doe not know, but as the same appeares by some effect of faith; untill which time, as I condemne none, no more dare I justify all, but leave them all unto the good pleasure of God, that onely knows who are his. And this I beleieve, that God of his mere grace, before the world was, did elect and choose a number in Christ to salvation. All which shall unavoidably come to glory, as Ephes. 1. Rom. 8. 30. But who these be, that I doe not know, untill God reveales the same by some effect of his grace appearing in them. And all that I intend by opposing Infants Baptisme, is but onely to forbear a while and waite upon God in the use of means, untill faith appeares to meet with God in his holy Ordinance, without which the same is voyd and of no effect; but prophaned, God provoked, and the party endangered. Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment, take him, &c. Mat. 22. 12. 13. And also that Baptisme administered in an Antichristian Church, and by the same power, is no ordinance of God; so that all such so baptized, are to submit to the Lords ordinance of Baptisme, whensoever God calls them to beleieve and receive the Gospel. And

## The Epistle to the Reader

yet not holding any rebaptizing, for he that is once baptized with the Lords true Baptisme, he needs no more. Nor yet a new way of baptizing, as some to please themselves so call it; but onely that good old way, which John the Baptist, Christ and his Apostles walked in before us, and left the same as a Rule under command in the holy Scriptures, for such as will be followers of them to walke by.

And as it is recorded by the holy Ghost in the Scriptures of God; even so it is the judgement of the most and best learned in the Land, so farre as I have seene, or can come by any of their writings. As in all the common Dictionaries, which with one joynt consent affirme, that the word Baptisme or Baptizo, being the originall word, signifies to dipp, wash, or to plunge one into the water; though some please to mock and deride, by calling it a new found way, and what they please. Indeed it is a new found truth, in opposition to an old growne error; and so it is a new thing to such, as the Apostles Doctrine was to the Athenians, Act. 17. 19. But this being no part of the following Discourse, I shall leave it, and turne such so mocking over to consider of these Scriptures, Isa. 28. 22. Pro. 17. 5. Isa. 57. 4. Act. 17. 32. Heb. 11. 36. Jude 18. & Gen. 21. 9. with Gal. 4. 29. and I doubt not but the wise hearted Reader will try and examine things of so high a nature by the Word of God, and not to build upon darke unsonnd consequences, and false inferences, and lay by the plaine testimony of Scripture, that must decide all doubts and controversies in matters of Religion.

For sure I am, there is neither command, nor example in all the New Testament, for any such practise, as I know, and whatsoever is done in the worship of God, or obedience to Christ, without his command, or apparant example approved of by Christ, is of man, as a voluntary will-worship, after the commandements and doctrines of men; the which Christ testifies against as a vaine thing. This way the Gentiles are more forward in, then ever the Jewes were; and more bitter against such that doe oppose their traditions, then ever they were.

And therefore I beseech thee, Good Reader, beware of opposing the Gospell, and Christs holy order in the same. For which thing God fell out with his ancient people the Jewes, and threatens to make the Gentiles drinke of the same cup, if they oppose the power and authoritie of his Sonne Jesus Christ, as they did: and doe not the Gentiles this? Yea, and much more then ever the Jewes did.

The Gentiles are set forth in Scripture to be the greatest enemies that Christ and his Gospell hath in the world; for they rage, and bend up their forces against Christ, and his people: and the Gentiles they compass the Campe of the Saints to devoure them. Of them is the bottomlesse pit, out of which come the Locusts, with a King over them: and of them is the bloudie Dragon that stands against the Church, to suppress and devour Christs holy order, and Government, and her subjection to the same. Of the Gentiles rises that beastly State, with which the Kings of the earth joyne their powers, against Christs Kingly power and Subjects, and they tread underfoote the holy Citie. Not the earthly Citie Jerusalem, as some weakly affirme, but the holy & heavenly order of the Gospell, and the true Subjects thereof. The Gentiles Crucifie Christ in his myssicall body, which is more then to slay him in his humane body.

There is a time set for the long suffering of God towards the Gentiles: which time being once expired, God will have as strict account of the Gentils, as ever he took of the Jewes. Which day shall be as blacke and darke over the Gentiles, as ever it hath been to the Jewes. And more in that their sinne hath been greater against grace, Christ, and his members, by many degrees then ever the Jewes were. And therefore woe woe unto the Gentiles, because the day of their account draws neere. Therefore good Christian Reader, be well advised, and doe not take part with any that shall oppose Christ in his sweet and comely order among his Saints, and kingly Government over his Subjects. Wee see by apparant example, how dangerous a thing it is to oppose Kings; but Christ is the King of Kings; therefore kisse the Sonne, least he be angry, Psal. 2. 12.

JOHN SPILSBERRY.

Yet truth  
was before  
error.

Col. 2. 20,  
21, 22.  
Mark. 7. 7,  
8.

Rom. 11.

Psal. 2.  
Ezek. 38.  
Rev. 20.  
8, 9.  
Rev. 9.  
11-11.  
Rev. 12. 4.  
Rev. 13.  
1, 2.  
Rev. 17.  
13, 14, 17.  
Rev. 11. 2.  
Rev. 11. 8.  
Rev. 17. 17.  
Rev. 11. 2.  
Luk. 21. 24.  
Rom. 11.  
20, 21, 22.

A  
TREATISE CONCERNING  
THE SVBIECT OF BAPTISME

VWherein is handled, and also disproved, *Infants Baptisme.*

The Covenant God made with *Abraham*, and his seed, *Gen. 17.* And how the same agrees with Belcevers, and their seed, under the New Testament, with the Priviledges thereof.

The *Baptisme* administred by a false Antichristian Power, no Ordinance of G o d.

The orderly constitution of both Church and Ordinance.

*With many other things briefly handled.*



OR a more orderly proceeding in the following Discourse, I shall first lay downe the Arguments and Objections, and then give Answer to the same. And for some things in the beginning, I shall passe over briefly, they not much concerning the point in hand. As the Scriptures being a perfect rule of all things, both for faith and order; this I confesse is a truth. And for the iust and true consequence of Scripture, I doe not deny; and the covenant of life lying between God and Christ for all his Elect, I doe not oppose: and that the

outward profession of the said Covenant, hath differed under severall Periods, I shall not deny: and of the Scriptures speaking of the disanulling and abolishing the old Covenant and making a new, is to be understood of the Period from *Moses* to Christ, and not of that from *Abraham* to *Moses*. This also in part I confesse, but not the whole; because that the abolishing of the old Covenant or Testament, reached unto all that outward forme of worship, under any type or shadow, by which the people professed their faith and obedience to God.

So that the abolishing of types and shadows, must reach so farre as any types and shadows were, and that was unto Circumcision it selfe: unto *Abrahams* Period; and beyond; even to all those sacrifices in any part of the old Testament, wherein God testified his pleasure unto his people in any darke and typicall way, or they their faith and obedience to him by the same.

So that the opposition the Scripture holds forth between Covenant & Covenant, is between Testament and Testament, with reference to the order and forme of profession thereof. But I leave this as little concerning the matter in hand, and come to that which follows. And the first to any purpose is layd downe thus.

*That chidren are capable of the Spirit of God, and of the grace of the Covenant, and whatsoever men of yeares are capable of, though not wrought in the same way, and by the same*

*Obj.*

means, yet the same things, and by the same Spirit, so farre as is necessary to union with Christ, and justification to life thereby: else children were not elected, or raised up againe in their bodies, and be saved; nor yet the judgement we can have of men of yeares be infallible, but we may be mistaken, as in the case of Simon Magus, and others in the like nature.

*Ans.* In answer to this, let it be in the first place considered, what may be here meant by children, because the Scriptures speake of children in a severall respect.

If such children as the Scriptures call so, through weakness in the faith, as *Mar. 18. 6. 1 Job. 2. 12. 13. 1 Cor. 3. 1. Heb. 5. 13.*

Now if such children as these, then I confesse, that such are capable of the Spirit of God, and so of the rest, as aforesaid.

But if by children be meant of infants, then we are to consider what is meant by capability of the Spirit, the grace of the Covenant, and the rest. If capable of the Spirit, so as opposed to the power of the Spirit to worke upon them, so is a stone as well as a man, as *Mar. 3. 9.*

But if capable to comply with the Spirit, in hearing, receiving, and beleeving the Spirits testimony; and so of Regeneration, faith, and repentance, &c. This I shall deny, untill some prooffe be produced from the Word of God for the same.

And to affirme this to be Gods way to bring persons to the faith, by working so upon them by his Spirit in their infancy, argues some ignorance of the true nature and worke of grace, as the Gospell holds it forth.

And to be capable of the grace of the Covenant, which must be understood of the promise containing the blessings and priviledges thereof, in the holy dispensations of the same.

We shall finde in the Scriptures of God, all the sweet promises of Grace under the New Testament, holding forth their blessings, and blessed priviledges onely to such as beleve. And that to the Elect themselves, as they are considered in Christ, and appeare so by some effect of grace, declaring their faith, and they to be such as God approves of in his Sonne, and so to have visible right to those priviledges they are visibly justified by, and possessed in, as such that have a visible right unto the same. Which can come to us Gentiles no other way then by Christ, and faith in his Name.

*Obj.* And if any shall object from the testimony of John the Baptist, that he is said to be filled with the holy Ghost from his Mothers wombe, &c. and hence conclude, that Infants may have faith.

*Ans.* To this I answer in a word; first, what Infants may have is one thing, and what Infants can from this Scripture be proved to have is another. For if any thing from this Text can be proved for Infants, it will be, that they are filled with the holy Ghost from the Mothers wombe, as *John* is said to be, which is another thing then to beleve; as *Act. 6. 5. & 4. 31.*

Secondly, All such to testified of by God, as he did of *John*, I shall acknowledge as much as is here meant to be in him, to be also in them so testified of by the holy Ghost. But to asirme, because God so testified of *John* the Baptist in the wombe, therefore the same holds true upon all other Infants likewise. This is indeed weaker then infan: y so to asirme, and grosser then ignorance for any to beleve. *Job* is said to be a Guide to the distressed from his Mothers wombe. Shall it be concluded thence, that he was a Guide to such when he was an Infant: or if he were so, must it needs follow, that all Infants are capable Guides, because it is said so of him.

And lastly; I am not against any that have faith, but absolutely for all that beleve;



leeve; whether Infants or others; so that their faith appears by such effects as the Word of God approves of. Otherwise what have I or any man to doe, to meddle with the secret and unrevealed things of God, either to justify or condemne.

And whereas in the former Proposition, there seemes a restraint made of the worke of grace in an Infant over there is in other persons, by saying, *onely so farre as is necessary to union with Christ, and justification to life thereby.*

Now for answer to this, we shall first consider what in this sense is to be understood by Christ: and secondly, what by union with Christ, so as to be justified thereby. By Christ here, I understand him so, as the Gospel holds him forth in the work of mans Redemption, in reference to his death & resurrection; and the onely righteousness that commends such to God as beleeve in the same. And so Christ thus considered, is the onely subject of life to every soule that shall be united unto him by faith. To which union with Christ, these three things must be minded, as essentiall to the same.

First, Gods revealing & tendering of Christ, as the sufficient & onely way to life.

Secondly, A heart truly disposed by faith to apprehend and receive Christ so tendered.

And lastly, The Spirit of grace uniting and knitting of the heart and Christ together, as aforesaid.

And this I understand to be that effectuell and substantiall union with Christ, to justification of life, which the Word of God approves of; that must decide all differences in matters of Religion. For justification to life, ever presupposeth apprehension of Christ, as the subject of life, and a true application of the same by faith, as aforesaid. The Gospel holds forth no other justification to salvation, but what is of faith; and faith ever presupposes the parties knowledge of the thing beleeved, *Rom. 10. 14. Heb. 11. 6.*

Now let this be well examined by the rule of truth, & then let the Reader judge, how capable Infants are of union with Christ, and justification to life thereby. Now for to darken and obscure this truth, there are these evill consequences, as absurdities brought in, as to follow upon the same.

*First, If Infants should not be capable of those graces aforesaid, then they were not elected. Secondly, Then their bodies should not be raised againe to life. And lastly, we have not insensible judgement, but may be mistaken, as in the case of Simon Magus, &c.*

To this in a word: and first I would know of such, whether Infants with reference to their non-age, were the subjects of Gods Election. Secondly, If Infants so considered, are capable subjects of glory. And if not, as I suppose none will affirme, then why any more in Grace then in Glory. And for any to appoint God a way how to save Infants, or to draw out to themselves a way how the holy Spirit of Grace must sanctifie them to salvation, above what is written, I thinke it is somewhat too much boldnesse. God will have his creature to keepe onely to his Word, as the Rule by which man must judge all things; and the Word of God shews that he hath elected persons to the meanes as well as to the end, being the way unto the same. And that was the Adoption of Sonnes, and to be called and justified by beleeving in Jesus Christ, as *Ephes. 1. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 29. 30. 1 Per. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 14.* And therefore the ground of Gods calling us, and our beleeving is attributed unto our Election, *Act. 2. 47. Act. 13. 48. Rom. 8. 28. Rom. 11. 7.* And to the glory of God, as the cause of all, by the dispensation of his grace upon his chosen in Christ, and their free obedience unto him againe, as *Rom. 9. 23. 24. Ephes. 1. 6. 12.*

Obj.

Ans.

These things God hath revealed in his Word; and further, I dare not goe, but leaving the secret things to God, who gives not account of all his wayes.

And for the raising of Infants bodies, doth none rise but such as are in visible union with Christ; as for invisible things we meddle not with. It is the power of God that raiseth the dead, and not union with Christ, 1 *Thes* 4. 16. And when any of Gods Elect can by the Scriptures be shewed to die in their infancy, then it will be granted that their bodies are raised to life eternall, onely as they are Infants. Nor that I hold all that dye in their infancy to be damned, but being a secret thing, I leave the same to God. And though that we have not infallible knowledge to judge aright of the hearts of men, which thing is proper to God alone: shall we not judge at all therefore? we are to goe on as neere as we can by the Rule of Gods Word; and in so doing, we discharge our dutie, which binds us to judge of the free by his fruit. And though we are not infallible Judges, but may be mistaken yet this will not follow, that we should iustifie a tree upon which no fruit at all appeares, but rather to goe on by the rule of judgement; and if we doe misse, to be humbled for our weaknesse rather then leave all undone, because we are not sure to doe it infallibly. But I would not be understood to oppose Infants so, as to exclude them from salvation; no, I am so farre from this, that I doe not so much as impose any such worke of grace upon them, as essentiall to life, in this or that way, as many doe, but leave all in respect of them as a secret thing to the wisdom and grace of God in Christ; by whom the sinne of all the Elect are for ever done away at once.

And for this, that I presse for in all that challenge right to any priviledge of grace, is onely to have some warrantable ground to judge by, and so to know who God doth approve of; as those unto whom such priviledges belong. Seeing he hath proclaimed, that *all by nature are children of wrath*, Ephel. 2. And I cannot beleve that any are naturallly borne in grace, and so beleevers from the wombe, though the opposite doctrine teacheth and affirms the same. And so I come to another Proposition, laid downe thus:

*Obj.* That Baptisme is not the first grace, but the second; neither doth it conferre grace, but is given to confirme the former. which therefore must be presupposed, or else not to be administered. And it is the seale of the new Testament, or of the righteousness of faith, now to all that are partakers thereof; as of old Circumcision was unto them. Rom 4 11. Onely understood by Baptisme, the outward part Administred by a lawfull Minister of the Church; which may and too often is, separated from the inward, though it ought not to be so, and yet remains true Baptisme so administred; & else Simon Magus, and those false brethren, Gal 2. being not baptized, and if they had repented, must have been baptized a new.

*Ans.* I shall not say much to this particular, because our chiefeft worke lies yet behind; onely thus much let the Reader observe, that here Baptisme is said to be given of God, as an Ordinance, to confirme faith in the subject baptized, and so to be presupposed, or else not to be administered. Now if God give it to that end for to confirme faith, then he never intended the same to be administered upon any, but onely such as have faith. And so much the next words affirme, which say, *That it must be presupposed, or else not administered*. Now I suppose it is meant, that faith in such is to be presupposed from some ground or visible effect of faith, in appearance at the least. For no man can properly presuppose a thing, without some appearing ground, from whence his supposition must arise, and specially in weightie matters. But what ground any man can have to presuppose a childe in the wombe, or one that is newly borne, to have faith, and so capable of a seale, as to be confirmed by Baptisme,

I cannot conceive, but rather thinke it to be great weaknesse in such that shall so presuppose or affirme. For it is a doctrine that confirms the opinion of such as hold faith to be naturall, and in a man from the wombe; and as some say, they have been believers ever since they were borne: And so it is here; for when an Infant is once baptized, it goes ever afterwards for a beleever, as well as any that are never so cleare in the faith, unless he comes to commit such sinne as to be excommunicated, untill which time he was ever a beleever before. But I passe from this, to the next particular thus:

*That as of old, more was required of Abraham and men of yeares when they were Circumcised, then of Ishmael and Isaac, or of other Infants, continually circumcised afterwards; so now in the administring of Baptisme, more is required of men of yeares, then is of Infants: of Abraham God required faith in the blessed seed; but not the same of Isaac: Of men of yeares faith is to be required, and must be that a man may be baptized, but not the same of Infants.*

Obj.

The substance of this particular lies thus; That more is required of men of yeares, for their receiving of Baptisme, then is of Infants; and all the prooffe is from the example of Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, and others in like manner after them in the order of Circumcision. I shall give a brieve answer to this by an Argument drawne from the same, thus; Upon the same condition, that Abraham, Ishmael, and all the rest of his household received Circumcision, so are all now to receive Baptisme. But Abraham, Ishmael, and all the rest of his household were circumcised upon one and the same condition, without requiring any thing more of one then of another; as Gen. 17. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. 23, 25, 26, 27. Therefore all are to be baptized upon one and the same condition, without requiring any thing more in one then in another, which is faith & repentance in all alike, Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15, 16. Act. 16. 31, 32, 33, 34. Act. 2. 38. Act. 8. 12, 13, 37. Act. 10. 47.

Ans.

And whereas it is said, that faith in the blessed seed was required in Abraham, but not in Isaac, who was to be circumcised at eight dayes old; It is more then I finde the Scriptures reveale, that such a faith was required of Abraham at the time of his circumcision, or else he must not have been circumcised; Or that the same faith in the blessed seed Jesus Christ, was so required of all his household at the time of their circumcision, is more then yet appeares to me. And as it is said, that the same faith was not required of Isaac, as afore-said, no more was it required of Ishmael, who was 13. yeares old when he was circumcised, Gen. 17. 25. nor of the Shechemites being men of yeares, Gen. 34. So that this Proposition falls in it selfe; and so I leave it, & come to the reasons & Arguments themselves.

The first Argument lies thus; If the Covenant now under Christ, be the same that was before Christ, with Abraham and his posteritie in the flesh; then as Infants were partakers of the Covenant then, and received the seale thereof Circumcision: so are Infants now partakers of the Covenant, and ought to receive the seale thereof Baptisme. But the Covenant now under Christ, is the same that was before Christ with Abraham and his posteritie in the flesh: Therefore as Infants were then in the Covenant and received the seale thereof; even so are Infants now in the Covenant, and ought to receive the seale thereof. Three things are to be cleared in this Argument.

1. Argu.

First, That the Covenant made with Abraham and his posteritie in the flesh before Christ, and that now under Christ, is the same. Secondly, As Infants were in that Covenant, so are Infants now. Thirdly, as Infants were sealed then, so they ought to be now. Now for the proving of these aforesaid, there are 3. other grounds laid down as follow.

First, The Gospel is the doctrine of the Covenant, but this being one, was preached to Abraham, as Gal. 3. 8. 17. 18. Rom. 4. 11. and so to the end; and to the Jewes in the Wildernesse, Heb. 4. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 7. and so in Davids time, Heb. 4. 7. &c. Therefore the Covenant is the same.



Secondly, If *Abraham* be the Father of the Jewes and Gentiles, and equally as he beleev'd the righteoufnesse of faith, and they his children equally as so beleev'ing, and no otherwise : then the Covenant is the same. But *Abraham* is the father of the Jewes and Gentiles, and equally as he beleev'es, as aforesaid, *Rom.* 4. 11, 12, 16, 17. 23, 24. *Gal.* 3. 3. 9. 26. 29. Therefore the Covenant is the same.

Thirdly, The standing of the Jewes in the Grace of God, was the same with *Abraham* ; as is cleare from Gods often expressing of himselfe to be the God of *Abraham* and his seed ; and praying to God for to remember the Covenant he made with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and acknowledging the accomplishing of the same to them, as *Luk.* 1. 73. 74. *Luk.* 1. 54, 55. and ours in the same with the Jewes, as is cleare from *Mat.* 21. 41. 43. & 22. 1. Therefore the Covenant is the same.

*Ans.* Thus lies the Argument, and the grounds to back it, and all to prove the Covenant God made with *Abraham* and his seed, to be the same now to the beleev'ing Gentiles and their seed ; and Infants to be in this now, as they were in that then.

In answer to which, I shall onely touch at the three last grounds, briefly in a word, as I come to the Covenant it selfe. The first is because the Gospel is the doctrine of the Covenant, and was preached to *Abraham*, and to the Jewes, &c. therefore the Covenant is the same. For the first, if the preaching of the Gospel, being the doctrine of the Covenant, can prove the Covenant to be the same to them as to us, then all to whom the Gospel was and is preached, are in the same Covenant. But I think it is the effectually beleev'ing of that which the Gospel holds forth in the doctrine of it, that proves persons in the Covenant, and not the preaching of it, because many may have the Gospel preached among them, and yet not be in the Covenant. And for the second, that *Abraham* is the equall father both of the Jewes and Gentiles, onely as he did beleve, and they his children onely so beleev'ing as their father *Abraham* did, and not else. In respect of which, the covenant is the same to the one as it is to the other. This in a sense I confesse is a truth, that none are accounted children of *Abraham*, but onely as they beleve as their father *Abraham* did : and if this be true, as the ground affirms it is, then let the Reader judge, how Infants can be said to be the children of *Abraham*, and in the Covenant, and so to have right to Baptisme, as the seal to confirme their faith, and whether they doe beleve as *Abraham* did. But that *Abraham* may be said to be an equall father both of the Jewes and Gentiles, I thinke not so in all respects : the Jewes were the seed of *Abraham*, as they descended from his loynes, as well as from his faith. But for the Gentiles they are called the seed or children of *Abraham*, onely as they walke in the steppes of his faith, and not else ; as *1 Pet.* 3. 6.

*Obj.* And lastly, that the standing of the Jewes in the grace of God, was the same with *Abraham*, and ours the same with the Jewes ; therefore the Covenant is the same.

*Ans.* This doctrine so generally laid downe without distinction or exception, holds forth a mans falling from grace, or out of Gods gracious Covenant of life eternall. A doctrine to be testified against by all that truly feare the Lord. For *Abraham*s standing was true and firme in Gods gracious Covenant ; and if the Jewes was the same without exception, then the Jewes that did oppose Christ, and were cut off for the same, fell out of this Covenant of grace. But I shall further cleare this in that which follows ; and so I come to the Covenant it selfe, and to see how that God made with *Abraham*, and this under Christ, will agree. In the handling of which, in the first place this must be well observed, that there was in *Abraham* a double seed when God made his covenant with him and his seed, and confirmed the same by the seal of Circumcision. There was in *Abraham* at that time a spirituall seed and a fleshy seed. Between which seeds God

ever distinguished through all their Generations. And as there was a distinction thus made by God in *Abrahams* seed before they were circumcised, and yet admitted to the seale of the Covenant by Gods speciall command. For *Ismael* and *Esau* were by God commanded to be circumcised as well as any of the rest of *Abrahams* seed, *Gen* 17. 10-13. Even so there must be the same respect observed also in the Covenant, and that because the Covenant comprehends divers things; and Circumcision was a seale unto them all. Some of which were proper unto both the seeds, and some not; as may be gathered from the severall branches of the Covenant expressed by God, *Gen* 17.

As first, for the multiplication of *Abrahams* seed, *Gen* 17. 2 this was proper as well to his fleshly seed, as his spirituall; as *Gen* 21. 13. *Deut* 10. 22. *Isa* 48. 19.

Secondly, The land of *Canaan*, *Gen* 17. 8. This was proper also to both the seeds of *Abraham*. And as it was onely a temporall inheritance, the same was conditionall, as *Heb* 3. And so confirmed by circumcision upon both the seeds of *Abraham*, as *Gen* 21. 9, 30. *Deut* 30. 18, 19, 20. And as it pointed at a spirituall inheritance, shadowed out under it. Now thus considered, it was absolute, and confirmed onely upon the spirituall seed; as *Gen* 17. 19. 21. *Gen* 21. 12. *Gal* 3. 17.

Thirdly, That from *Abrahams* loynes should come a seed, in whom all the Nations of the earth should be blessed; as *Gen* 17. 16. 19. & 18. 10, 18. & 21. 2. This blessed branch of the Covenant was proper onely to the spirituall seed, considered either in the cause, or in the effect; as *Act* 3. 25, 26. *Gal* 3. 7, 8, 9, 16.

Fourthly, *Abrahams* fatherhood of the faithfull; as *Gen* 17. 4, 5. This was onely proper to faithfull *Abraham* and his seed, as they are found walking in the steppes of his faith; as *Rom* 4. 11, 12, 13, 16. *Rom* 9. 7, 8. *Gal* 3. 6, 7, 9. 1 *Pet* 3.

Lastly, To be a God to *Abraham*, and to his seed after him in their generations; as *Gen* 17. 7. That was faithfully to performe all that he had promised, either to *Abraham* in particular, or his seed in generall; as *Neh* 9. 8. *Psal* 105. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. 42. *Luke* 1. 72, 73, 74. In token of which God annexed Circumcision, as a seale to confirme the same; as *Gen* 17. 11. These are the severall parts and branches of the Covenant that God made with *Abraham* and his seed, and Circumcision in the flesh as a seale to confirme every part to each seed, as was proper to the same.

But if any shall say, the Scriptures deny many seeds, and approve onely of one seed in *Abraham*, with Whom the promise was made; as *Gal* 3. 16.

Obj.

To this I answer and say, that this place well considered, will help forward the truth; for the Apostle here speaks of the Covenant, so as comprehending Christ the substance of the same, and the Elect in him for eternall life. In which sense the covenant of grace was not made to *Abraham* and to all his seed without exception; for then all his seed must either be saved, or else such as are not but perish, must fall out of the said covenant of Grace; for I suppose no man will say, that all the seed of *Abraham* without exception were saved. And if not, then there was some of *Abrahams* seed comprehended in the Covenant in one sense, and admitted to the seale thereof, whom God excepted against in another: some of which was *Ismael* and *Esau*, signifying in *Abrahams* generation, a fleshly seed as well as a spirituall; between which seeds God ever held forth a distinction through all their generations, from *Abraham* untill Christ, who put an end to the type and the flesh, and all privileges of that nature thereunto belonging; as 2 *Cor* 5. 16. *Phil* 3. 3, 4, 5. So that now all is laid up in Christ, as Gods store-houſe and treasury, and in him only for such as beleeve, and therefore now first in Christ by faith, and then to the Covenant and the privileges thereof; as *Gal* 3. 29. And none by the Gospel approved of now to be the children of *Abraham*, but onely such as walke in the steps of his

Ans.

Col. 2.

faith. For as none invisible before God, are by him at all approved to have right to any priviledge of grace, but onely as he lookes upon them in his Sonne : No more are there any visibly before men to be approved of, so as to have right to the same, but as they appeare to be in Christ by some effect of faith declaring the same. And so much the more, in that God excludes all from his holy Covenant, is to have right in the outward dispensation thereof, but onely such as beleeve, *Rom. 11. 20. Heb. 3. 18, 19. Heb. 4. 1, 2, 3. Heb. 11. 5, 6. Rom. 9. 7, 8. Gal. 3. 22. 26, 29.*

Let all this be well considered, and I doubt not but the difference between the Covenant God made with *Abraham* before Christ, and this under Christ, will appeare very great, though in some respect for substance the same. Yet in the outward profession of them, the difference is great, both in respect of persons and things. Wherein our descent chiefly lyes : that covenant admitted of a fleshly seed, but this onely of a spirituall, *Gen. 17. with Rom. 9.* That in the flesh, and this in the heart, *Gen. 17. 13. with Jer. 31. 33. Rom. 2. 28, 29.* The seale and ordinances of that Covenant, confirmed faith in things to come, but the seale and ordinances of this, confirme faith in things already done.

That Covenant was nationall, and admitted all of the same to the seales thereof ; but this personall, and admits of none but such as beleve. That Covenant begot children after the flesh, as all *Abrahams* naturall posteritie. But this onely begets children after the Spirit, and onely approves of such as are begotten and borne from above, in whose hearts God writes his Law, *Jer. 31. Ezek. 36. Heb. 8. Job. 3. 5, 6.* That covenant with *Abraham* and his posteritie before Christ, comprehended a civill State, and a worldly Government, with the like carnall Subjects for the service of the same. But this covenant now under Christ, comprehends onely a spirituall State, and a heavenly Government, with the like spirituall Subjects for the service of this also. That covenant held forth Christ in the flesh to a heart veiled ; this holds him forth after the Spirit to a face open, *2 Cor. 3.* In all understand, the visible profession of the Covenant, in the outward dispensation of the priviledges thereof.

*Obj.* And now I come to the consequence gathered from the Covenants, being one and the same, as aforesaid, That as Infants were in that covenant then, and circumcised, so are Infants in this now, and to be baptized.

*Ans.* In answer to which, I shall commit in the first place, to the Readers consideration these particulars, for the further clearing of the aforesaid truth. First, What the Covenant is. Secondly, What is that which admits into the said Covenant. Thirdly, Who are the true approved Subjects of this Covenant. And lastly, Whether all have not one and the same way of entrance into the said Covenant : and to each of these a word.

First, the Covenant it selfe, is a Covenant of grace and salvation, by which God of his grace takes a person or a people to himselfe for his own above all others, and to be their God, and to manifest upon them the riches of his grace and glory : and the manner of which is in effect but onely thus much ; Gods calling of a man to an agreement with himselfe in his Sonne, wherein he promises to be his God, and to give him life and happines, and all things in Christ, and that he shall beleve and rest upon his faithfulness and truth, and so take him for his God, &c. And thus I say, God and man come to an agreement in Christ, upon something passing between them, wherein they both agree, and this is called a Covenant ; and I call it a covenant of grace, when the thing agreed upon is a subject of grace ; as Gods giving of man life and peace, and all things in Jesus Christ, and that he will be his God, upon whom he shall relie, and beleve the accomplishment of all things in his due time ; and that he shall heare and know his will by his Sonne, and obey him in the same ; and mans free consent to God againe, that he

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likes of all this well, and concludes with God that it shall be so. For a Covenant presupposeth two persons at least, and also something to agree, or covenant upon: thus did God with *Abraham*, and so he doth with every beleever; and chiefly when God takes any into a Church-fellowship. So that the covenant consisteth of these essentials. First, the persons disposed to agree. Secondly, something to agree upon. And lastly, their mutuall consent, which is the agreement it selfe. And so much for the Covenant, and what the same is.

Secondly, What it is that gives right to enter, or admits any into the said Covenant, and that is the promise of God in Christ, and faith in the same. that gives right of entrance, and onely admits into Covenant with God; as *Neb. 9. 8.* The Covenant aforesaid, hath these essentiall parts, and visible branches. First, Grace in the agent, God. Secondly, faith in the Subject, Man. Thirdly, a uniting or closing of these together, which is that mutuall consent & agreement by faith in the same grace, revealed by the Gospel, which is the word of Reconciliation. So that it is the blessed word of life, and faith in the same that gives right, and admits into Covenant with God.

Thirdly, Who are the true approved Subjects of this Covenant, and they are onely such as beleeve; for God approves of none in covenant with him by his Word out of Christ, nor of any in Christ without faith. Nay, God denies his approving of any in fellowship or communion with him, that doe not beleeve; as *John 3. 5, 6 36. Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 8. 9.* Thus God approves of none as Subjects of his gracious covenant, but onely such as he hath elected and chosen in Christ, and so appearing by some fruit and effects of the same; as these Scriptures, (with many other) witness, *Rom. 8. 29, 30. Rom. 11. 7. Ephes. 1. 4, 5, 6. 2 Thes. 2. 13, 14. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Act. 2. 47. Act. 13. 48.* So that such as are the chosen and called of the Lord, are the onely approved Subjects by him in his saving and ever-blessed Covenant of life.

The fourth and last is this; Whether that all persons now under the Gospel, have not one and the same way; of entrance into the foresaid Covenant?

For answer to this, the holy Word of God must be Judge, and I find: the Gospel of Christ to approve of none in the Lords holy Covenant of grace, but such as beleeve; neither any approved of, as to be in the way of life, but such as are in Christ by faith; and therefore no other way to come into the Covenant of grace and salvation (as the Scriptures reveale) but only by Jesus Christ. For in him are all the promises confirmed, & made over only unto such as beleeve; as *2 Cor. 1. 20. Rom. 10 4 1 Job. 5. 11, 12. Rom. 8. 9.*

The holy Covenant of life consisteth of these three essentials for entrance thereinto. First, the word of God to reveale the same. Secondly, Christ to open the way, and to inright the partie therein. And lastly, faith without which none can enter thereinto. So that as there is but onely one way of entrance into Covenant with God, that the Scripture reveals now under the Gospel, & that is by Jesus Christ, and faith in his name. Then all must enter this way that can be approved in covenant with God; for none can come to the Father but by the Sonne, nor any to the Sonne but by faith; as *John 14. 6. with John 6. 44 45. Heb. 11. 6.* Let all this be well considered, and then see how Infants are discovered to be in this Covenant, & what way of entrance hath God by his word appointed for them to come in, and denied the same unto others, except they be naturally begotten & born in the covenant, and so were never out of the same: which thing indeed the opposite doctrine affirmes; for if Infants be in the covenant of grace, and that by vertue of their being borne of beleeving parents who are in the same, then such Infants are borne in a saving estate of grace, and were never out of the same; which doctrine makes voyd many heavenly and divine truths that speak to the contrary, which

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lay all under sin and wrath for the same; as conceived in sin, borne children of wrath, and so under the curse, untill Christ by his blood and death redeemes them, and by his heavenly voice calls them, and by his holy Spirit of grace, begets them unto a lively hope, working faith in their hearts, to lay hold upon Christ, Gods arme of salvation that carries them up to glory; and therefore all are said to be borne againe from above, of water and of the Spirit, before they can enter into the Kingdome of God.

Now for such as are begotten and borne in the covenant, being the seed of beleevers, as is affirmed, then such were never out of the same; which doctrine disables them of any of the former priviledges by Christ; for none can be under grace, wrath & the curse at one and the same time, in the outward dispensation of the same; the which all our discourse intends; for invisible things belong to God: and so I come to some other grounds, to prove Infants to be in the covenant now, as they were of old, and they are these.

*Obj.* First, If it were not so, then this Covenant would not be the same with that.

*Ans.* And for answer to this, I shall referre the Reader to what hath been aforesaid, concerning the difference between the Covenant then and this now: not the same in a typicall way, nor the same in a fleshy seed, nor the same in the outward priviledges, nor the same in the visible profession thereof, &c. All which I have already spoken to, and shall adde more hereafter.

*Obj.* Another ground is this, else the state of the grace of God should be strained and made of lesse extent by Christs coming then it was before, whereas it is more enlarged, and of greater extent, there being nothing more required in the state of the persons to intereste Infants into the covenant then, then is now.

*Ans.* This particular consists of two parts, and the first is to this effect; if Infants be not in the covenant now as they were at the first, then is the covenant of lesse extent since Christs coming, then it was before; the answer is, that indeed it is of lesse extent in respect of the flesh, by Christs coming, then it was before, because that by him is taken away all fleshy respects, either in regard of persons or priviledges in matters of grace; which is a further enlarging of the covenant in a spirituall sense; for the neerer the covenant comes to perfection, the larger it is; and the perfection of the covenant in one sense is this, to have nothing contained in it, but what is truly of it; and the contrary is a straitning of the same, and a bondage unto the true Subjects thereof.

Again, It cannot properly be said, that the covenant in the full accomplishment of the same in glory, will be more straited & of lesse extent then now in grace; and yet there shall be none but onely such as truly appeare to be of the same.

*Obj.* The second part of the Proposition lies to this effect; There was no more required in Infants then to intereste them into the Covenant, then there is required of Infants now.

*Ans.* For answer to this in a word; let the Reader consider well, what was required to intereste Infants into the covenant then, and see if there be the same for to intereste Infants into the covenant now. There was required then, 1. a male onely of 8. dayes old, 2. of the seed of Abraham, and lastly, a speciall command from God for the same in particular; for though that the covenant had been never so firme between God and Abraham, yet if he had not had a command in speciall to Circumcise, I suppose he would not have done it: & if the command had bin only to have preached the way of God to the people, and to circumcise such as beleeved, and imbraced the same truth preached unto them, and no other expresse word of command for an Infant of 8. dayes old, & that the practise of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, had been the same, without any direct and apparent example of their circumcising Infants. I do beleeve that none of the Jews that tru-

ly feared God, would have been so bold as to have circumcised their Infants, or if they had, let the indifferent reader judge, by the word of God, if it had not been a sin of presumption to goe above what was written, & for their personall interest into the covenant, this is required now, as was then, to be of the seed, or children of *Abraham*, and visibly so appearing now, as they did then. And who these are, I appeale to the word of God for righteous judgement, *Rom. 4. 11, 12. Rom. 9. 7, 8. Gal. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. 16. 22. 26. 29.* This I have shewed before, and shall more cleare hereafter; and so I come to another Proposition thus:

*Abraham being the roote, and the Jewes and Gentiles the branches; When the Jewes were broken off, as well Infants as men of yeares were so also: the like when the Jewes shall be planted in againe, as well Infants as men of yeares shall be so.*

To passe over the difficulties, and things that will not be granted about the Jewes coming in, as this argument seems to import in the laying downe of it, I shall onely speak a word to what is intended, or implied; and for the better understanding of all in a word, let the Reader well consider, in what sense the Gospel holds forth *Abraham* to be the roote of Jewes and Gentiles. Secondly, how the Jewes and Gentiles may be said to be *Abrahams* branches. Thirdly, the way of their breaking off. And lastly, what way this will make for the Gentiles and their Infants to come in, and for the Jewes and their Infants coming in, I shall let that stand by untill the time comes, or for some Scripture to reveale how the same shall be.

And first to see how the Gospel holds forth *Abraham* for a roote of Jewes & Gentiles, and that is onely in respect of his faith and faithfulness, and so he is the paterne and father of the faithfull, that resemble him in the same, otherwise *Abraham* is not the roote of the Gentiles, for they descended not from his loynes as the Jewes did. So that the Jewes and Gentiles are *Abrahams* branches, onely as they spring out of the same roote by faith, which declares them to be his true naturall branches, so farre as they onely appeare to be of the same faith as he was. This I have been upon somewhat before, and shall be more fully hereafter. But now for the Jewes breaking off, this was onely for want of their activall beleeving the Gospel; as *Rom. 11.* and opposing the same, *Act. 13. 46.* Even so were the Gentiles received in, onely upon their activall beleeving and receiving the same. And as God rejected none of the seed of the Jewes that beleeved, for their parents unbelief; no more doth God admit of the Gentiles seed that doe not beleeve, for their parents beleeving; for as the word condemnes none, but with respect to actuall sinne; no more doth the word justifie any, but with respect to actuall faith: and as every ones owne faith in Christ inrights to life, so every ones own faith in Christ inrights to the priviledges of life.

*That the Jewes and the Gentiles being incorporated into one body in Christ; as Eph. 2. 11. to 20. As the Jewes Infants were in the same body, even so must the Infants of the Gentiles be also.*

I answer, in a word, that the Church of the New Testament consists both of Jewes & Gentiles: this is a truth, and admits of all that beleeve, and rejects none; and for the Gentiles Infants being in the same body as well as the Jewes Infants. This I also beleeve, both alike, for the Church of the New Testament, though it consists of Jewes and Gentiles, yet she never admitted of any Infants as members in her body, or to the priviledges thereof, but as they appeared to beleeve, and so capable of the same.

*Another Proposition lies thus; If by this word to Abraham, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed, Infants are included, and therefore of old circumcised, and the same promise continued in the same state to the Gentiles, then the Gentiles Infants are in the same also; but the first is true, and therefore the second; and so Infants are to be baptiz'd.*

For answer to this, let the Reader consider well, that for a man to take this unto *Abraham*, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*; for a ground of Circumcision, this cannot be so, but onely the word of command that enjoyned the thing; for if God had but onely made his covenant with *Abraham*, and not a commanded him to circumcise; it had been sin for him to a circumci-

fed any ; so that it was not the promise, but the command that was the ground of *Abrahams*, and the Jewes circumcising their Infants. And so the same ground must serve the Gentiles to baptize their Infants, which is not the covenant, but the like expresse command from Christ for the same ; but as there is none, therefore the first ; yet the second is not true, and so Infants are not to be baptized. Againe, let it be minded, in what sense God did covenant with *Abraham* to be his God, and the God of his seed. 2. How we are to consider *Abrahams* seed, with which God made his covenant. For the first, God sets forth himselfe to *Abraham*, to be the Almighty God, and so an All-sufficient God, for *Abraham* to repose himselfe, and build his faith upon : from which ground *Abraham* is commanded to walke before God, and to be upright ; which implyes true faith, and holy obedience ; with reference to which God made his covenant with him, being a fit and capable subject for the same ; as *Neb. 9. 7, 8.* And with respect to which faith and faithfulness, God took in with *Abraham*, all his posterity for a people to himselfe under Circumcision, and other Ordinances, by which God did distinguish them from all other Nations in the world. And to be a God to *Abraham* and to his seed after him, that was faithfully to performe his promise, in making of him great, & giving him a seed, in whom the Nations should be blessed, with which seed he would establish his covenant, for an everlasting covenant ; and so he would be a God to his seed after him, in doing for them all that he had promised, to multiply them, to give them that fruitfull Land of *Canaan*, and so to blesse them with great prosperitie. And also I will be their God, that is, their God whom they shall beleve and obey, upon whom they shall depend for the performance of all that I have promised unto them ; by which faith and obedience they shall acknowledge me to be their God.

Now these being the particular expressions of the covenant, and as they lie barely in the letter, they are figurative speeches, and so considered onely as they were temporall ; for so was *Canaan* a temporall inheritance, and so were the other outward blessings, under which were figured our spirituall substances, onely to the like Subjects. And as they were outward or temporall, so considered they were both generall and conditionall ; for as the people did then beleve God, and obey him, so they did enjoy them, and not else ; as *Heb. 3.* Unlesse which covenant circumcision was added, as a token, to put the people alwayes in minde of the said covenant ; as *Gen. 17. 11.* and a seale to confirme the covenant on both the sides, God to be a God unto them as aforesaid, and they for his own people above all others, and so to performe the same condition of faith and obedience, as *Abraham* their father did. And to walke as such circumcised in heart, unto which they were engaged by that Ordinance ; as *Rom. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.* otherwise the covenant stood not in force for their outward prosperitie, that was the glory of that people in generall. In which respect onely, the covenant, the seale, and the inheritance, are all of a like extent ; as *Gen. 17. 7, 8, 13.* and so ended in Christ, in whom all stands firme onely to such as beleve ; as *Gal. 3.* This covenant was accomplished by God upon the Jewes at three severall times, as they were *Abrahams* seed. First, in bringing them from *Egypt* to *Canaan*. Secondly, from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*. And lastly, Christs coming in the flesh, as the seed in whom all Nations should be blessed. This blessed seed according to the covenant God made with *Abraham* was sent first to *Abrahams* seed the Jewes in generall ; as *Mat. 19. 5, 6. Mat. 15. 24. Job. 1. 11.* To blesse them, by calling them to repentance, and so to turne them from their sins ; as *Act. 2. 38, 39. Act. 3. 25, 26. Act. 13. 23, 26, 32, 33.* Thus the King of heaven offered his Sonne first in marriage to the Jewes ; as *Mat. 22.* and being refused by them, he sought him a wife among the Gentiles ; as *Act. 13. 46. Act. 15. 14. Rom. 11.* And so much for the promise or covenant God made with *Abraham* and his seed, which for the right understanding of it, must be considered in a severall respect, according to the seed : but not so to the Gentiles and their seed, the Covenant lies not to them in a figurative way, nor in any fleshly or temporall respect, as it did to *Abrahams* seed in the flesh : but to the Gentiles in substance, onely as they are in Christ by



faith, and so upright as *Abraham* was when God made covenant with him; and if otherwise, that the Gentiles must be considered as the Jews, then they must have a fleshly seed, under the same conditional respect as *Abraham* had, & have onely one publike head, as *Abraham* was to bring them in, & all stand in the same relation as children to a father, to that one head, as *Abraham's* seed did unto him, and come in the same way, both for covenant, and command, as *Abraham* and his seed did: All which the Scriptures deny the Gentiles for coming in such a way.

And so I come now to the seed; and first to begin in the fountaine and head-spring of all, at *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and see the Gospels discovery of their seed, compared with the Law, by which it will appeare what the seed of *Abraham* is, that God approves of to be in the covenant with him, and so to have right to the seale thereof. There was under the old Testament a generall stated people in an outward forme of profession; among whom God owned but a remnant to belong unto him in his gracious covenant of life; as *Isa.* 10. 21, 22. *Rom.* 9. 27. Against some of which in the generall God excepted, as not so approved of in his covenant, and yet admit them lawfull members of that body, and so to the privileges thereof, they being the seed of *Abraham* after the flesh; Jo  
as *Gen.* 17. 10. 20, 21, 23. *Gen.* 21. 12, 13. *Gen.* 25. 23. with *Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 13.

So likewise under the new Testament, there is also a stated people, whom God approves of for his own chosen and true spirituall worshippers; against whom he layes no exception, but owns them as such whom he hath purchased with his own blood, and so approved Subjects in his gracious covenant of life, as such who are called chosen and faithfull, *Joh.* 4. 23. *1 Pet.* 2. 5, 9. *Eph.* 2. 19, 20, 21, 22. & 4. 16. *1 Cor.* 12. 12, 13. 25, 26, 27. *Eph.* 5. 25, 26, 27. *Act.* 20. 28. *Rev.* 17. 14.

Now unto these two stated or bodied people, there is in the Scriptures two typical heads, namely, *Hagar* and *Sarah*, as *Gal.* 4. 22, 23, 24, 25. Here *Hagar* and *Sarah*, as the two Mothers, type out the two Testaments; even so their two sons, *Ismael* and *Isaac*, type out the subjects of the same, the one by the bond-woman born after the flesh, but he of the free-woman was by promise, *v.* 23. Now as *Hagar* the Mother, signified the old state in generall, so *Ismael* her son, signified the children of the same state, borne after the flesh, as he was; for though that he was of the seed of *Abraham*, yet he was no child of promise. Now for *Sarah* she was the lawfull wife of *Abraham*, and so a free-woman, with whom the Apostle compares the state of the Church of the new Testament, the true spouse and wife of Christ, who is free from all servitude and bondage, & stands onely in subjection to Christ her husband, as *Sarah* did to *Abraham*. And *Isaac* her son, signifying the true holy and blessed seed. Of this holy stocke according to the Spirit, and so as *Isaac* was true heire according to promise; for the Gospel approves of none as true heires of the blessing, & so the right seed, and truly in the covenant, but onely such as the promise produceth & brings forth, as it did *Isaac*; for *Isaac* came not by an ordinary course of nature, but by vertue of the promise of God, and faith in the same, which raised nature above it selfe to bring him forth; as *Gen.* 18. 10, 11, 12. *Gen.* 21. 1, 2. *Rom.* 9. 9. *Heb.* 11. 11, 12. By this the wisdom of God in the Apostle holds forth as in a figure, who are *Abraham's* seed, approved of in the Gospel, & they are such as are brought forth by a power above nature, which is by the promise of God, & faith in the same, as *Isaac* was. And therefore such are said to be as *Isaac* was, children of the free-woman, the true seed of *Abraham* after the Spirit, & so heires according to promise; as *Gal.* 4. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Gal.* 3. 29. *Rom.* 9. 8.

Now the promise in the letter, the land of *Canaan*, an earthly possession answerable to the heire naturall, and Circumcision in the flesh, as a seale to confirme the same upon condition of the like faith and obedience, and so to walke as such circumcised in heart. So God would be their God, to blesse, increase, and to bring them into their promised inheritance; as *Deut.* 1. But in the substance, the heavenly *Canaan*, a spirituall inheritance, answerable to the heire spirituall, and Circumcision in the heart, as the seale of the Spirit, to confirme faith in the free and absolute promise of life, and faith required not of man, as a condition, but in man, as the work of the Spirit of grace in the heart, by which the same is made capable to joyne in covenant with God by faith. And though;

that Infants were in the first, yet not at all in the last; as visibly to appeare in the covenant aforesaid, untill their faith so declares them

And further, consider of it thus; first, that no beleever now can so stand to his seed, as *Abraham* of old did unto his seed, except he assumes the place of *Abraham*, and also his fatherhood over all the faithfull. But if any beleever should so farre presume as to assume *Abrahams* place, and fatherhood upon him, yet another cannot doe so. Except we make many *Abrahams*, and so all fathers, and no children.

*And if it be said, that every beleever in his owne familie is an Abraham.*

If it be so, then he is the same unto his servants as well as to his children, for so was *Abraham*.

*But some will say, that a beleever is an Abraham onely to his own personall seed, as Abraham was.*

Then a beleever would have a greater priviledge then ever *Abraham* had; for the covenant was not founded upon *Abrahams* personall seed, for had it been so, then the priviledges thereof would have reached to all *Abrahams* personall seed, as well as to *Isaac*. But this it did not, for *Abraham* begot many children of his own body besides *Isaac*, who shared not with him, neither in the covenant nor priviledges thereof; as *Gen. 25. 1. to 6.* The like it is with the beleivers seed, to which the covenant lyes, not in any respect, as to a particular seed, but joyntly considered together as a body, and so the Church of Christ, and their off-spring, seed, or children, as aforesaid, considered, are the generation of the righteous, succeeding them in the faith, not in the flesh. And this is the seed that God so highly exalteth in Scripture, and promises so many blessings unto.

And secondly, it was not *Abrahams* personall being in the covenant, nor yet his faith that brought in his seed, or admitted the same to the seale thereof, but onely Gods speciall commandement, for both *Abraham* and many others were in the covenant of grace long before Circumcision was administered; and the reason why such were not sealed with circumcision before that time, was because that God no where had commanded the same. No more can a beleivers being in the covenant now, bring in his seed, nor admit of the same to Baptisme, without Gods speciall command for the same now, as *Abraham* had then, otherwise they proudly assume a priviledge above their father *Abraham*. And though that beleivers are in some sense under the same covenant now, as then, yet in no sense under the same command, for then they must circumcise, and not baptize, and that Males onely, and not females also. But as there is a new King, so there must be a new Law, and as a new covenant, so a new subject; a new Church must have a new state, & a new ordinance, a new commandement; so that as all things are become new, even so must all be of God, whose will is to be obeyed in whatsoever he commands, which is the only ground of all mans obedience; for no man can be said to obey God in doing that which he hath not commanded: therefore seeing there is no command from the Lord for the Baptizing of Infants, as was for the circumcising of Infants, though by *Abraham* they were circumcised, yet by Christ, they shall not be baptized. And so I come to the second Argument, thus:

*If in the whole body of Israel, as well Infants as men of yeres were baptized, and with the same Baptisme as ours is, then Infants are now to be baptized, as then they were: But in the whole body of the Israelites Infants were baptized, and that with the same baptisme spirituallly that ours is: therefore Infants are now to be baptized, as then they were. That it was the same baptisme with ours spirituallly is evident; the other Ordinances there mentioned were the same spirituallly with ours; for they eate the same spirituall meate, and dranke the same spirituall drinke with us, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4. Therefore they were baptized with the same spirituall baptisme: Otherwise the Apostles argument were not of force against the Corinthians, if they were not the same Sacraments with ours, nor the conclusion contained that the Corinthians should be punished with the like punishment, if they committed the like sins; therefore the argument is firme.*

In answer to this, I shall endeavour to be briefe, therefore let the Reader consider well these particulars. First, here God took unto himselfe the whole body of these people the Jewes, who were his own people before by covenant; for they were the seed of *Abraham*, and the family of *Jacob*

that came into *Egypt* to sojourne there; as *Gen. 46. Aft. 7.* Now let the like be made to appeare that God ever took unto himselfe the whole body of the Gentiles, as he did the Jewes, and then it will be somewhat the same with the Gentils and their seed, as it was with the Jews and their seed. But if the one cannot be proved, then the other will not be granted: and so this argument falls already. Secondly, here was no ordinance of the new Testament, much lesse Baptisme administred upon any of the *Israelites* at their departing out of *Egypt*, but onely Gods great power & goodnesse, declared by leading of his people through the maine Sea, in and by the which God did preserve them, and so delivered them up as it were to *Moses*, and to his Government and direction, as a people preserved in death. As in and by Baptisme the partie being by the grace and power of God preserved, he is delivered up to Christ, to his Government and direction, as one risen from death, with a new life to God; as *Rom. 6. Col. 2. Gal. 3.* The *Israelites* Baptisme in the Cloud and in the Sea, was onely in the type or shadow, and so in the Letter of the old Testament, opposed to the Ministration of the Spirit in the new Testament; as *2 Cor. 3.* and is ours so far as the type may agree with the truth and no further. So that in the type and figure it was theirs, but in the truth and substance it is ours; Therefore that Baptisme which they had in the old Testament under a vaile, was not the same Baptisme that we have in the new Testament with the face open, *2 Cor. 3.* And though that Infants were baptized with their Baptisme, yet Infants are not to be baptized with our Baptisme; for we have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle. Thirdly, that Infants were then baptized with the same Baptisme spirituallly that ours is; this is somewhat question, because to be spirituallly baptized, is to have the internall and spirituall part of Baptisme, and so the substance as well as the externall part, and then all such so baptized as I thinke must be saved. But many of them that were baptized in the Cloud & Sea, were overthrowne in the Wildernesse, as a testimony of Gods wrath against them; as *Heb. 3.* Therefore such though they had the outward externall part, and so the shadow, yet not the internall and spirituall part, the substance; and so not the same Baptisme with ours spirituallly as affirmed. Again, they were not spirituallly simply in themselves considered, for then the *Egyptians* and the cattell that went out of *Egypt* with them, should have so partaken of them; for the *Egyptians* ate of the Manna, and the cattell dranke of the water, and all passed through the Sea. Therefore they were spirituallly only as they served to some spirituall end or use appointed by God, and that was as they signified & held out some spirituall thing. So that such are said to eate of the same spirituall meate, and to drinke the same spirituall drinke, which are capable so far to eate and to drinke of them, as they are spirituall things. And so the blessed Apostle applies the same unto Fathers, as men of yeares and so capable, and not unto Infants, neither doe I finde Infants punished among the *Israelites* in the Wildernesse, nor yet threatened by the Apostle among the *Corinthians* in the Apostles sense. And this way carries the Apostles Argument in force against the like sinners among the *Corinthians*, or any other people; for the scope of the Apostles Argument is to informe the *Corinthians*, and so all others as well, that no outward priviledge whatsoever, shall secure any people from punishment that goe on in sinne. And to make this appeare to be true, he presents them with an example of Gods dealing with his own people of old, even our fathers, who had as great outward priviledges as any the *Corinthians* had, and yet for all this, upon their going on in sinne, God punished them accordingly.

But what for all this; Suppose all be granted, that the whole body of the *Israelites*, together with their Infants, passed through the Sea, and were all baptized unto *Moses* in the Cloud; and in the Sea. What can this make for the proving of the Gentils baptizing of their Infants now under the New Testament? If this proves any thing for Infants Baptisme, it must be upon the like occasion, unto the same end, and by the like command, as all the former was; for the *Israelites* had a speciall command from God for all that they did; to depart with their Infants out of *Egypt* by name; and to passe through the Sea, and to follow the Cloud, and to doe whatsoever was done e-

ther by them, or their Infants. Now if there be not the like occasion, end, and command from the Lord, to the Gentils, for them to baptize their Infants, as here was for the *Israelites*, then the Argument is infirme, and of no worth; but there is no such command from God for the same: Therefore, though that the *Israelites* Infants were baptized then, yet the Gentiles Infants must not be baptized now. And so I come to the third Argument, laid downe thus.

There is one and the same consideration of the first fruits, and the lump, the roote and the branches; but the first fruits and roote beleeving Parents are holy, and must be baptized; therefore Infants the lump and branches are holy, and must be baptized also. The first part is cleare from the Law, of sanctifying the rest of the fruits, by offering the first fruits, there being nothing more required. The second is cleare from *Rom. 11. 16.* with *1 Cor. 7. 14.* Both which places are of a like consideration, and have the same sense and meaning; and for the latter, it is I suppose mistaken, when it is expounded to be the same with that which is spoken before, of Infidels persons sanctified to the beleever, so as that the beleever might dwell with the Infidell daily; for if the meaning were so, then the Apostles argument were none at all: for this might be questioned in the nature of the thing as well as the former, and therefore if he intended nothing else, he said nothing to cleare the Generall, and the scruple from thence. Besides the Apostle saith two things; first, that to the pure, all things are pure and sanctified, therefore a beleeving husband or wife might dwell with an Infidell yoke-fellow.

The second thing is, that by vertue of a beleevers estate in grace, all his fruit is holy, and partakers of the same state of grace with him; unlesse they do by some evill act of theirs deprive themselves of it, as *Esau* and *Ishmael*, and such like have done. The Apostle speaking therefore of a twofold holinesse, the one not in the thing it self, but to anothers use; the other of the thing it self, it cannot be but sinfull for to confound them. Thus lies the argument, and the grounds proving the same word for word.

In answer to which, I shall first call over again the Argument it self, and speak a word to that, and then more fully examine the truth of it in the grounds alledged to prove the same.

The Argument thus: there is one and the same consideration of the first fruits and the lump, the root and the branches. But the first fruits and root beleeving parents are holy, and must be baptized. Therefore Infants the lump and branches are holy also, and must be baptized. Let the wise hearted Reader observe the fallacie in this Proposition, & the strength which bears up all the building that is laid upon the same, is onely taken for granted without proof. First for the root that is here taken for granted, but no way proved to be beleeving parents, which I deny as hereafter I shall manifest to the contrary by Gods assistance. Secondly, that Infants are put for the lump and branches, which I also deny, as in due place will appear. These being presupposed, the argument is grounded upon the words of the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 16.* *As the first fruits are holy, so is the lump: and the root being holy, so are the branches.* Gathering from hence, that as the first fruits to God did sanctifie all the rest of the same lump; so beleeving parents sanctifie all their seed that proceeds from their loyns. And so as the first fruits, and the root being beleeving parents are holy: even so the lump and branches being their Infants are holy also, and so to be baptized as their parents are; which is a meer fallacie, and farre from the intent of the Apostle in those words. And for our better understanding of the same, let us a little examine the Scriptures alledged: and first for *Rom. 11. 16.* The generall scope of the Apostles discourse in this Chapter is concerning the Jews breaking off, and the occasion of it; as also their calling by the Gospel, who were the people of God in a two fold consideration. First, as they were a nationall people according to the flesh, with many outward priviledges sutable to the same; by which God declared himself to be their God, and they his people above all others in the world. Secondly, some of them God owned in a more speciall manner, with reference to his gracious covenant made with *Abraham*, and established with *Isaac*, and his seed after him for an everlasting covenant: As *Gen. 17.* which consideration cannot be of the Jews nationally considered, as I have formerly proved. For if so, then all the whole nation must have been in a true and saving estate of grace; and so all of them to have been saved,



or else to fall from an estate of grace. So that as God had then a nationall Church and people, even so had he for the same also nationall privileges both for order, ordinances and government. Which order cannot now be expected for us Gentiles under the new Testament; and though that God admitted them all alike to the outward privileges in the type, yet God had another consideration of them in respect of the substance; as not to approve of them all in his holy Covenant of grace. Yet of that whole body in generall, *Abraham* according to the flesh was the stock or root from whom they sprong as naturall branches, as *Job. 8.* Which nationall people must be considered in a two-fold respect. First, a civill state or common-wealth under a civill government, as Kings, Judges, and other the like Governors of that nature. Secondly, a Church consisting of an holy Assembly of worship and worshippers: and so a spirituall state with the like government and governors; as Priests, Prophets, and the like of that nature. All which held fellowship and communion together, because God took into one body that whole Nation for his own people. Or rather one head comprehending them all, which was *Abraham*, from whom they descended as children springing from the loyns of a father. All which so springing out of his loyns did assume to themselves an equall right and priviledge in Gods gracious covenant made with *Abraham* and his seed, supposing God had bound his covenant generally upon him and his seed in his naturall generation after the flesh. But God respecting in the same onely his chosen in Christ, with whom he confirmed his Covenant with *Isaac* in reference to Christ; *Gen. 17. Gal. 3.*

Who in Gods own time he calls them to the faith, that they might appear to whom they belong. *Rom. 8. 28, 29, 30. Gal. 4. 4. 6.* These the Apostle ever defends against the generall rejection of that nation. For though such were rejected as were not elected, this made not the promise of God of none effect to those who stood firm in the covenant by grace in Christ Jesus as branches in their root. Which grace the rest opposed, and were cast off for their unbelief: and when the fulnesse of Gods time is come to call them to belief, they shall be received again into their former estate as alive from the dead, as *Rom. 11. 23, 24. Luke 15. 24.*

Therefore the Apostle after he hath proved the rejection of the Jews, he labours to make good the faithfulness of God in his promise of grace, and the effectuall power of the Gospel in the saving effects thereof in such as beleeveth through grace, though the Jews in their nationall respect were rejected, and so few of them gained to the truth: as *Rom. 3. 3, 4. Rom. 9. 6. Rom. 11.* And he gives a reason of it thus: though that the Jews were all under an outward form of profession of Gods name and truth, and so his people in that respect; yet there was but a remnant that he approved of in the Covenant according to his election of grace, unto whom the promise of life did belong. As *Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8. Rom. 11. 5, 7.* Now to these Gods speciall care is to perform his Covenant, and all that he promised to them in their father *Abraham*, with reference to Christ, in whom as the root God established his holy Covenant for these his holy branches. *Rom. 9. 11, 12. 23. Rom. 11. 1, 2. Rom. 8. 28, 29, 30. Rom. 11. 26. 2. Pet. 3. 9.* Now the lump generally considered, comprehends all, both the first fruits and the latter: for except the first fruits were part of the lump, it could not give testimonie that the lump was holy; which lump so considered is Gods elect, and chosen in Christ, with reference to their beleeving in him: and so the approved subjects of Gods gracious Covenant, and heirs apparent to the kingdom of Christ. In which sense God had one and the same respect unto all, and every part of the same lump, and that was as he considered the same in a conformitie to his Son, as the end of his election. *Rom. 8. 28, 29, 30. Ephes. 1. 8, 4, 5, 6. 1. Pet. 1. 1, 2.* So that there is in the substance of truth one and the same consideration in the first fruits and the lump, according to what is laid down in the proposition; the lump being as aforesaid a remnant according to Gods election, with reference to faith, and so approved subjects in his holy Covenant, appearing in *Abrahams, Isaacs* and *Jacobs* beleeving as the first fruits of the same.

Now as those first fruits of that blessed crop in Gods holy Covenant were holy onely so appearing.

pearing ( for we speak of visible things ) so is the lump out of which these first appeared by faith, as a part of the same also holy in the same consideration. Again, the lump which the Apostle spake of, is to be understood of the Jews, and not of the Gentiles, as he here applies it; For though he speaks to the Gentiles, yet here he speaks of the Jews. For in the Chapter before he labours to provoke the Jews to receive the Gospel, as *vers. 14.* Therefore he intends the Jews by the first fruits of the lump. The first fruits the believing fathers, as aforesaid, that first appeared in the Covenant of grace, in such a way by faith, and so holy was that remnant which God had still among them, with reference to the same state the first fruits were in, and so holy; the same consideration is to be had of the lump, with reference to that state which God in his time shall call them unto by his Gospel, and so are holy also: for this must respect a visible holiness suitable to that in the first fruits, otherwise it makes nothing for the thing in hand.

All which well considered, will leave no place for Infants in this lump according to the Apostles intent; for look what were the subjects of Gods election, the same is the subject-matter of this lump. But the first were persons considered in Christ by faith, as hath been proved, and therefore these the same and not Infants. As *Ephes. 1. 4.*

*But if any will say that such as are elected and after come to believe, they were first Infants and then elected, and beloved of God, and so holy in their infancy.*

So it may be said of the reprobate, that he is first an infant, and the same in his infancy: but we are to walk by a rule, and to judge of persons by the word of God, and therein to see who they are that God by his Word approves of; and we to do the same, and then as the Word of God condemnes none but with respect to actual sin, no more doth it justify any without respect to actual faith, and so to see in the Gospel what persons the same approves of to be true subjects of grace, such as may be justified, and justly imputed members of the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood, and so true heirs of glory, and to be invested into all the privileges of grace by baptism. Now whether the Gospel inrights or admits any persons unto these holy privileges, without respect to their actual believing in Christ: but this nowhere appears in the new Testament, which is the onely will of Christ that is now in force, for the approving or declaring the lawfull subjects of the same; therefore no infants here admitted, untill they appear believers in Christ, and so the second fruits of the lump, answerably to the first fruits: for the first fruits ever imply a second of the same kind. As *1 Cor. 15. 20. 23. Revel. 14. 4. Rom. 16. 5. and 8. 23.*

Now for the root and branches, a word or two of that also.

By root here, is that from which the Jews were cut off, and the Gentiles grafted in; and that is not onely believing parents, and so the same with the first fruits, as the argument affirms, but Christ mystically considered, with reference to the rules of order, ordinances and government, laid down in the new Testament, for all such to believe, and submit unto, that God approves true subjects of the same. In respect of which Christ is called a Vine, a root, and the foundation. *Joh. 15. 1. 5. Rom. 15. 12. Rev. 5. 5. 22. 16. Isa. 28. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 11. Eph. 2. 20.* Upon which foundation the true prepared matter for the building is laid, which are such as have a discernable principle of grace and faith, by which they are onely capable siences to be grafted in the stock or root, and to be joyned as members to their head, and so becomes an orderly body, as *1 Cor. 12. 1.* In which respect it is called the household of faith, the Church of God, and the body of Christ: *Gal. 6. 10. Act. 20. 28. Ephes. 1. 22, 23, Col. 1. 24.* Which body consisting of particular members, as so many branches abiding in their olive tree, vine and root, Christ their head; who as the root feeds the whole body, so with nourishment and fatness, that every branch receiving of the same by faith becomes fruitfull. As *Joh. 15. 5.* with *Rom. 11. 17. Col. 2. 19. Ephes. 4. 15. 16.* That the root is meant Christ as aforesaid, with reference to the rules of the Gospel, and so as he is laid as the foundation of the new Testament appears in this: first in that he is the root or olive-tree, cut of which the Jews are cast, and the Gentiles grafted in, *Rom. 11. 17. 19. 23. 24.*

Secondly, in that the Apostle charges the Gentiles if they boast in themselves against the Jews, they bear not the root, but the root them: *ver. 18.* that is, thou appearest not to have the truth of grace, and so not the true nature of the root and life of Christ in thy heart, but onely an outward forme of the profession of him, As *Joh. 15. 2.*

Thirdly, from the consideration of that which the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received, which was Christ aforesaid. Therefore it is Christ in his mysticall order and government amongst his Saints, that is here the root and olive tree, with his Spirit in his ordinances, issuing forth sap and fatnesse of life and comfort into every beleeving heart as a branch of the same.

This will yet more clearly appeare, and consider what was the Jewes owne naturall roote and Olive tree, whereof they were naturall branches, onely by faith, as the Apostle so declares them, *ver. 20, 21, 24.* which was union and communion onely with God in all his divine ordinances of worship, the manner and forme of which was that mosaicall and typicall order of the old Testament, in which respect the Jews were the first that ever God tooke in communion with himselfe in such a holy way of worship, and therefore called the first fruits of his love in that respect, and naturall branches. Which order and manner of worship ( but not the matter ) being changed at the coming of Christ in the flesh, and a new forme and order set up by him, called the Gospel or new Testament, which order they opposed and were rejected: thus was Christ the precious tryed corner stone, and sure foundation laid in *Sion*; as *Esa. 28. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 6.* And was to the Jew a stumbling stone, and rock of offence; as *1 Pet. 2. 7. 8. Act. 4. 11.* For which the Kingdome was taken from them; as *Mat. 21. 41, 42, 43.* That is, they were cast out of fellowship and communion with God, in respect of his worship and service for this their unbelieve, and the Gentiles that did submit to the Gospel were taken in, for the worshippers of God under the new Testament, and so stand in relation to God, as heires of the Kingdome both of grace and glory by faith in Christ. And when God pleases to call them by the Gospel to beleeve in his Sonne, and submit unto him, as he is the Mediatour of the new Testament, then shall they be received againe into their old fellowship and communion with God, as of old, to serve and worship him againe, according to the orders and rules of Christ in the Gospel, as of old they did according to the order and rules of *Moses* in the Law.

And thus the Apostle proves their first estate to be holy, as first fruits of that holy and blessed relation they stood in to God by faith. From which for their unbelieve they are cut off, and the Gentiles by faith admitted in, of meere grace, and not to boast: and yet there is a remnant of them to be called as the lumps, and a second fruit, which are also holy in reference to the first fruit of the same holy root, as aforesaid. And as the roote it selfe is holy, so shall these branches be when they come to be grafted in againe to their owne roote or Olive tree, as at the first, which is union and communion with God in his holy way of worship, under the Gospel as of old under the Law. And so much for the roote or Olive tree, which must be understood of Christ mystically considered, and not of beleeving parents, as aforesaid.

Now a word of the branches, which cannot be meant of Infants, but beleevers onely in the Apostles sense, being holy.

First, They are branches onely in the same consideration as they subsist and grow in the roote or Vine, and so beare the true nature of the same, by which they appeare to be holy, by the fruits thereof. Christ, as aforesaid, being the roote or vine, the branches can no way be said to subsist and to grow in him as their roote, but onely by faith, and he in them by his Spirit, without which there is no holines in the Apostles sense, who speaks of such a holines as is produced in the branch, by the holy roote; in which ingrowes and so partakes of the nature of the roote, by vertue of the union and communion it hath with the same; all which is by faith, as the Word reveales.

Secondly, There is no branch that is alive in the Vine, but partakes of the life and sap of the same, by vertue of which the branch though never so young and small, is discovered to be alive,



and inabled to bring forth, in its season, such fruit as by which the same may be discerned : so it is here by these spirituall branches, they cannot properly be called branches in the Apostles sence, but as they partake of the life and grace of Christ, their true vine and olive tree, by which they appear at the least to be alive in him by faith, and inabled by the same to bring forth such fruits as may discover them to be in the Covenant of grace, and so to be admitted unto the priviledges thereof, as *Joh. 15. 1. 7.* Nature it selfe teaches as much, for no man will admit of dead plants to be set in his vineyard, or grafted into a stock, but onely such as are capable to comply with the same, in the sap, and nourishment thereof, to the end it may grow and bring forth fruit : and so it is with Christ, who comes not short of nature, and therefore he admits not of any dead plants to be set in his spirituall vineyard, or dead members to be joyned to his mysticall body, but onely such as by faith are capable to comply with the head. Neither took he for himselfe a compounded body, consisting of both living and dead members, which all are that have not a living principle of grace & faith in him, which all beleevers Infants have not; nor any at all, untill they are borne againe of the Spirit, as *Joh. 3. 5, 6.* The Church of God, which is the mysticall body of Christ, is not a mixt company, but onely one substantiall and royall substance, futable to her head & matter, by which shee was produced, being the immortall seed of the Word; and therefore one holy spirituall uniforme compacted body, both for nature and forme, *1. Cor. 6. 9. Mal. 2. 15. Eph. 2. 14. to 22. Joh. 4. 23.* All which considered, proves the body of Christ, or Church of God under the new Testament, to not consist of Infants; neither in whole nor in part; and so the branches afore said, not to be understood of Infants, but beleevers.

*And if any object from the words of Christ, Mat. 18. 6. speaking there of some little ones that beleeved in him, and from thence gather that Infants have faith, &c.*

The answer in a word is this; That I am for all that beleeve, and onely for them, whether they be Infants or others; so that their faith be visible, as it may be discerned, otherwise it concerns nothing the point in hand; for we are upon visible things, such as may be judged of by the Word of God. Again, little children that beleeve, in the Scripture sence, are such as be little and weake in the faith, and so babes in Christ; as *1 Joh. 2. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 1. 3. Heb. 5. 12, 13.*

*But it is said, that the Church of the Jewes of old, and the Church of the Gentiles now, are one in nature, as they are both the Church of God, and so Infants in the one, as they were in the other, and the same priviledges to the one, as to the other, &c.*

I have before shewed the large difference between the Jewes and the Gentiles, in respect of their outward priviledges; but a word or two more, and so end. The Church of God under the old Testament, and that now under the new, for nature are one, in reference to the Elect of God, called to the faith, and by the spirit of grace united to Christ, as the branches to their vine, and so an holy plant of Gods planting; of which indeed the true Church of Christ consists; and therefore God did ever put a distinction in Abrahams seed, even from Abraham to Christ; as in Abraham, between Isaac and Ishmael, *Gen. 17. 20, 21. Gen. 21. 11, 12, 13.* in Isaac, between Jacob and Esau, *Gen. 25. 23. Rom. 9. 11, 12.* in Jacob, between Ephraim and Manasse, *Gen. 48. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19.* And thus the holy Ghost figuratively pointed at a difference in Abrahams seed, between the children of the flesh, & the children of God, *Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8.* And though God did thus distinguish in Abrahams posteritie, yet there could not be the like dividing in the same, they being a nationall people, consisting both of a Church, and so spirituall, and of a common wealth, and so all under a civill worldly government. Which nation God crowned with many outward priviledges, as he never did any people in the earth, they being the first people that God ever tooke into covenant with himselfe in such a way; by whom he raised himselfe a name and fame in all the world, and so his peculiar treasure, to whom he committed great matters of trust, as *Psal. 135. 4. Rom. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4. Eph. 2. 12.* Of whom came Christ the Saviour of man, and therefore salvation is said to be of the Jewes; as *Rom. 9. 5. Joh. 4. 22.* In respect of which there was a blessed promise passed upon

the Jews, for the bringing forth of the Messias, and the promised seed, in whom all Nations should be blessed. And therefore all of that nation were admitted to the outward priviledges, as figures of him which that Nation was to bring forth : so that a fruitfull wombe was counted a great blessing among the Jews, not knowing who might be so honoured as to bring forth that blessed and all blessing seed. And therefore God honoured the naturall birth among the Jews, with such outward blessings and priviledges that belongs not to the Gentiles at all. The Gentiles now are to look for their bringing forth of Christ according to the Spirit, as the Jews did then according to the flesh : and likewise their birth, and their seed in all things sutable to the same. As *Joh. 3. 3. 5. 6. Joh. 1. 12, 13.* and therefore we are said now to know no man after the flesh, no nor Christ himself as the Jews did, not Christ himself after the flesh, *2 Cor. 5. 16.* and Circumcision was one priviledge of the flesh ; as *Phil. 3. 4, 5.* Therefore though that the Jews infants were admitted to all those outward priviledges being a nationall people, and so a nationall bodie, with a naturall birth, and the like seed in generall, yet the Gentiles infants cannot be admitted to their spirituall priviledges, they being a personall people, called by the Word of grace, and so a spirituall body with a spirituall birth, and the like seed.

And so much for the meaning of the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 16.* which makes nothing for the baptizing of Infants, but altogether against the same, the words not being well considered, and therefore misapplied ; the first fruits being such as first so appeared of Gods elect by faith in such a way of grace by Gods receiving and approving of them in his holy covenant, under so many gracious promises. The lump, such a remnant in the election of grace, chiefly of the Jews, with reference to the same state of grace and faith in Christ, as the first fruits were in, when God so approved of them. And so a second fruits following the first fruits of the same kind, which first fruits did ever presuppose the same. And so for the root and branches, the root Christ mystically considered as aforesaid, as the Scriptures hold him forth. The branches such as grow in him by faith, and he in them by his Spirit, by which they are alive in their vine. All which are understood of beleevers, and not of Infants, and so with respect to their calling and not to their infancy ; as *Act. 2. 39.* which promise is in no other sence to the children then to the parents ; and that is either to turn them from their sins, by calling them to repentance. As *Act. 3. 19 20. 25. 26.* or to comfort them so turned ; or repenting by tendring and applying to them the promised Saviour Christ Jesus ; as *Act. 13. 23. 26 32, 33. 38, 39.* And as God hath not grounded his election of grace in the seed of beleevers, but in the good pleasure of his will : no more hath he the dispensation of the same in his gracious Covenant, but in his free and effectual call to beleeve in his Son, in whom they were elected to the same ; which call to the faith makes the onely difference between them and others, and not their being the seed of beleevers by a naturall birth. For we are alike by nature, children of wrath as well the seed of beleevers as any others, considered in any personall respect ; as *Rom. 3. 9. Eph. 2. 3.* Whose happinesse depends upon that blessed change, and spirituall birth by which they are born again, and called to beleeve in the Lord of life ; and not their being the seed of a beleeving parent ; for so one may be and perish as soon as any others.

And now for the other Scriptures, *1 Cor. 7. 14.* if this be of the same consideration with the former, then the same is answered with that, and so they are both void in respect of the end for which they are alledged ; namely, to prove the holinesse of infants being in the Covenant of grace and life, by vertue of their being the children of beleeving parents, and so to have right to Baptisme. But I do not understand this Scripture to be of the same consideration with the former, and therefore a word or two of this also.

And for the understanding of the Apostle in the same, its good first to consider what that holinesse is which inrights persons to the priviledges of grace, and that is one of these two at the least ; Either the holinesse of Christ, in whom God looks upon his children, and approves of them holy in him, and so to have right through his Son to all things both in grace and glory. Or the holinesse of Gods workmanship in the heart by the holy Spirit of re-

generation, appearing in the holy fruits and effects thereof, by which such persons appear, to have right to the aforesaid privileges, before men who must judge of the tree by the fruit, and of both by the Word of God. *Ephes. 4. 24. Tit. 3. 5. 1. Pet. 1. 15, 16. Hebr. 12. 14.* There is no other holiness that proceeds from Gods holy Covenant, or that can inright to any privileged of grace now under the Gospel. For whatsoever can truly inright any person to the privileged of grace, the same inrights to glory. For no lesse can inright to grace, then what inrights to glory. So that if this be such a holiness, then look how many it inrights to Baptisme, it also inrights to glory: and so all that are baptised, being children of believers, and so holy, must be saved or else fall from grace. But neither of these doe I beleve for truth, and therefore this holiness must be some other holiness then that which tends to life eternall. It is said, the unbelieving wife is holy, or sanctified which is all one by the husband; and the unbelieving husband by the wife: and if it were not so, your children would be unclean also; but in that the unbelieving husband and wife is holy by the believers, so are your children by the same means holy likewise. For the same way the children would be unclean, by the same rule of contraries they are holy. But if unbelieving husband were not sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the believing husband; now if they were not thus sanctified the one to the other, that so they might lawfully continue together as husband and wife, their children would be unclean, in that they were begotten in an unlawfull way, for here the uncleanness of the unbelieving and unsanctified parents if in case they were so: and the uncleanness of the children is the same: even so on the contrary, the unbelieving husband being sanctified by the believing wife, that so they may lawfully continue together in that honourable way of marriage, and the bed undefiled, hence your children are holy. Which holiness of the children and the sanctitie of the unbelieving parents is the same; opposed to the uncleanness in opposition to the same. So that as the one is uncleanness of the flesh, so is the other the holiness of the flesh, compared with these together: *Exra 10. 2. 3. 1. Sam. 21. 4, 5. 1. Cor. 6. 18. and 7. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 3, 4.* And for the two-fold holiness that is noted in the Argument to be considered in the Apostles words, the one not in the thing it self but to another use; and the other of the thing it self, and therefore sin to confound them.

This is in part true, for the holiness of the children is not onely such a relative holiness as to another use, as the unbeliever to the believers use, and no more; but the holiness of the children rests in themselves, as the subjects thereof by nature, being begotten and born in that lawfull and honourable way of marriage by Gods appointment, and so holy and clean in opposition to such as are begotten and brought forth in a way of uncleanness, as adultery, fornication, and the like. And whereas it is said, that if this were the meaning of the Apostle, then he said nothing for the clearing of the scruple, because this holiness of the children might be questioned as well as their own, &c. To which I answer, and say, that to expound the Apostle this way, makes onely for the clearing of the scruple, which scruple besell the Corinthians by reason of an Epistle, which the Apostle writ to them before, as *1 Cor. 5. 9.* wherein he so presses them from having any communion or fellowship with any unclean person, in the worship of God; which they understood of civill commerce with the world, upon which they questioned the lawfull retaining of their unbelieving husband and wives, and to have communion with them in that neer relation of husband and wife in their civill commerce and societie. And so much the more, having an example of the like nature in the Law. *Exra 10. 7.* about which thing they wrote to the Apostle for information, *1 Cor. 7. 1.* and questioned not their children. Whereby it appears they held it lawfull for to retain their children. To which the Apostle answers from a double ground, thus.

1. In that all things are sanctified to such as believe; as *Tit. 1. 15.* and so is the unbelieving wife to the believing husband. So that you may lawfully live together in that comfortable estate and societie of marriage which God hath ordained for man and wife to abide in.

2. If you judge your selves to live in such a way of uncleanness upon which you must now part, then your children so begotten are unclean, and to be put away also: but in that you hold

it lawfull to retain your children, and not to put them away though you beleeve, and they do not. Then much more the unbelieving parents as aforesaid that bear them: for if the effect be holy, then must the cause be also holy that produceth the same; which is Gods holy ordinance of marriage, and not his holy covenant of grace. Now it had been in vain for the Apostle to have gone about to prove the lawfull restraining of the unbelieving husband and wife from the holiness of their children being in the Covenant; for nothing was more clear then this, that such children as are begotten in uncleanness were not approved of in Gods holy Covenant of life, nor any way holy either by Law or Gospel. How then could this tend to remove the *Corinthians* scruple, to tell them they might lawfully continue together, because their children were in the Covenant of grace and life, and so were holy; when as their scruple lay in matter of uncleanness upon which they were to part. Now this must first be cleared, whether they were so or not in respect of themselves, before ever they could beleeve the holiness of their children, or any such to be in Gods gracious Covenant: for the children of adultery and fornication are debarred the holy Covenant both in the Law and Gospel. But if it be said that the scruple was about the unlawfull commerce of the beleever with the unbeliever, and not of their marriage, as if they lived in adultery and fornication, and so the uncleanness of the flesh in that respect as if they were not married. Now if this be true, that they scruple not their marriage; then it holds true also, that they did not question the lawfull retaining of their children: And so the Apostles argument from the same is of force to prove the lawfull continuing of their parents also; though the one called to the faith, and so a beleever, and the other not. In which respect they judged their children free from that uncleanness the unbelieving parent was or might be guiltie of: to which the Apostle answers and affirms, that the condition of the parents and the children is one and the same in the aforesaid respects. If they put away the one as unclean; upon the same ground the other is unclean, and to be put away also. And as the one is holy, and to be retained; upon the same ground the other is holy, and to be retained likewise.

And I conclude as I began, that the holiness here both of the unbelieving parents and the children is the same for nature, being opposed to one and the same uncleanness, which is onely the holiness of the creature in a naturall respect; not the holiness of the gracious Covenant of life in a spirituall respect, as it is affirmed. And so this Scripture also hath nothing at all in it for the proving of Infants true subjects of Baptisme.

*One thing more in the Proposition I cannot passe, which is this: That by vertue of a beleevers state in grace, all his fruit is holy, and partakes with the same state of grace with him; unlesse they do by some act of theirs deprive themselves of it, as Esau and Ishmael.*

A word briefly of this, and so I leave it as answered already.

1. If this be a truth, then one may be saved by another mans faith; for here by vertue of a beleevers state in grace, all his fruit, that is, his children partake of the same with him, and so far as he doth, onely by vertue of his grace or state in grace, which is the same. And so by the fathers faith the children share together with him in that grace which his faith instates him in, which is salvation it self.

2. This doctrine takes away the being of originall sinne, for here they are all holy, and partakers of grace untill they commit some actuall sinne. Which denies any originall sin, for that would make them unholy, though they never committed actuall sin in their own persons.

3. It layes a ground of falling out of an estate of grace; for by this doctrine *Esau* and *Ishmael* and all beleevers children are holy, and partakers of the same grace with their parents, untill they commit sin as *Esau* and *Ishmael* did, and then to fall from the same as they did.

And lastly, this is false doctrine, for both *Esau* and *Ishmael* were excluded from being subjects of Gods saving grace before they committed actuall sin. As *Gen. 25. 23.* with *Rom. 9. 11. 12. 13.* and so *Gen. 17. 20. 21. Gen. 21. 9. 10. 12.* But as it tends to Poperie and Arminianisme, so I shall



leave it as an old Creed bare error, not worth any further meddling with. And now to the fourth and last Argument, thus.

4. If Baptisme succeeds circumcision, then as infants were to be circumcised, so are infants to be baptized; but Baptisme succeeds circumcision; as Col. 2. 11, 12. Therefore as infants were circumcised, so are infants to be baptized.

5. This Argument is somewhat weak, and therefore a weak answer shall serve; What though Baptisme succeeds circumcision, must it needs follow, that as Infants were circumcised, they must of necessity be baptized. The new Testament succeeds the old, must it needs follow therefore that the same order be observed now, as was then; All the whole household of every familie among the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, as well children as others, were to eate the Pascheover, *Exod.* 12. 3, 4. And the Lords Supper succeeds that, and yet Infants are not approved as fit Communicants in the Lords Supper, because they are not capable subjects. But it is a double mystery, how persons are fit and capable of union in a State, that are not fit and capable of communion in the ordinances of the same State. And more mysticall, how one should be a capable subject of Baptisme, and not of the Supper. I can see no Rule for such a practise in all the booke of God; and its against the Rule of nature, that when a childe is borne, to keep it from food. The Church of the new Testament succeeds the old, but it will not follow that the like order and subjects succeed each other also; for no rejected *Ismaelite* or *Esau*, are to be admitted either to union or communion in the Church under the new Testament by Christs appointment, therefore though that Baptisme succeed circumcision, yet the same subjects doe not so. The two Testaments are as Wills containing certaine Legacies, given and bequeathed to such onely as whose names are expressely set downe in the same; as *Rev.* 21. 27. In the old Testament as the first Will, a Male of eight dayes old, or a Prosolyte, *Exod.* 12. 48, 49. *Gen.* 17. 10--14. 23. 25. *Joh.* 8. *Phil.* 3. 4, 5. So in the new Testament, as the last Will of Christ, the Legacies therein contained, as the priviledges and blessing of *Abraham*, are given onely to such as beleve, and to none else, *Gal.* 3. 14 22 29. *Rom.* 8 17. & 4. 11, 12. & 9. 7, 8. *Gal.* 3. 6, 7. These are such as are begotten againe by the immortall seed of the Word, borne of the Spirit, and so children of God, and the onely true heires of the Kingdome of Christ, with the priviledges thereof; as *Jam.* 1. 18 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. *Joh.* 1 12, 13. *Joh.* 3. 5, 6 1 *Joh.* 3. 9, 10. *Rom.* 8. 17. These are the holy seed, which God so approves of in the Scriptures, as subjects of grace, & heires of life, and being in the covenant, they onely have right to the priviledges thereof; and their children or of-spring are such as succeed them in the same faith and truth, and so are called the Generation of the righteous, as succeeding each other in the way of righteousness, and not their Infants or personall seed proceeding from their loyns by carnall generation, as *Esa.* 43. 5 & 44 3. & 54. 3. & 59. 21. & 66. 22. & 61. 9. & 65. 23. compare *Rev.* 12. 17. *Gal.* 4. 26, to 31.

These and the like Scriptures shew what is the right and true approved seed, unto which the priviledges of grace belong: so that although Baptisme succeeds Circumcision, yet the difference is great, both in matter and manner, in persons and things. Circumcision sealed to things temporall and carnall, as well as spirituall, and so were the subjects, and things to come, as under types and shadows, and so in a cloud and dar knesse. Whereas Baptisme hath for its subjects children of the light, in the cleare evidence of the Spirit, with the face open, and confirms faith in things come, and already done; for Baptisme seals onely to faith in Christ, and grace in the new birth, which cannot be, where there is not first a begetting by the immortall seed of the Word of life; for which end God hath ordained in the Gospel preaching & beleiving to goe before baptizing, as *Mar.* 28. 19. with *Mark.* 16. 15 16. And that way or order which hath not God for its Author, and found in the Records of Christ with his image and superscription upon it, let us say as sometime he did, Give to *Cesar* that which is *Cesar*s, and to God that which is Gods; so say I, Give to Antichrist his baptizing of Infants, & to Christ, his baptizing of beleevers. What advantage will it be to Infants to come before they are called, to have a name to live, and yet dead for ought any one knows, and

to come to the marriage-Supper, without a wedding Garment, shall the holy things of God be forced upon such, as neither beleeve, know, or once desires them, will men set a seale to a blanke? are children capable to receive meate before they be borne, except we make Baptisme the wombe of regeneration, as many doe, who teach that Infants are regenerated & borne againe of the Spirit of grace in Baptisme, whose doctrine is of the same stampe and authoritie, as he that sent them so to preach. What can be more naturall, then begetting and bringing forth of the Infant, before feeding of it at the Mothers breasts? Is it not sacriledge to presse such upon the wife of Christ the Church, for her Paps, with whom she never travelled, or beare of her body? Christ will deny himselfe to be food and nourishment to any, where he hath not beene first seed to beget. Let men take heed how they impute such folly to the wisdom of God, as to give the milke of his breasts unto any that are still borne, or to set dead twigs in his heavenly and divine stocke, or naturall branches in his holy and spirituall vine. Let such beware how they fight against the God of order, least in stead of finding the breast to feed before the wombe to beare, they meet with a curse upon the single emptinesse of Christ, with a double barrennesse, that will admit of no conception or spirituall birth to succeed the naturall. Not that I intend in the least to deny salvation unto Infants, no, I am so far from this, that I testifie against all such doctrine, nor yet affirme all Infants to be saved, neither doe I know among Infants, which shall be saved, and which not, therefore I leave it as a secret thing to God, untill he makes the same appeare by some visible effect of faith, which onely gives a visible right unto any ordinance of the new Testament: and therefore I cannot see by the Gospel, how Infants voyde of visible faith, should have visible right unto the priviledges of grace; neither ought they to be admitted thereunto, as hath been proved; and also for these, and the like reasons following.

First, because there is neither command nor example for the baptizing of Infants in all the new Testament: the order and government of which, in the administrations thereof, is no way inferior to the old; but in the old Testament there was an expresse Rule, by command from God, what communicants were to be admitted to circumcision, and other ordinances of that nature, and what not; but this order is no where found in the new Testament for the baptizing of Infants, and therefore the same is not to be practised.

Secondly, It is a high contempt and injury to Christ, as he is the husband of the Church his holy Spouse, to force upon him an naturall wife, himselfe being spirituall, and desires the like associate, as such a Church is founded upon the naturall birth, namely, Infants, because commonly to one that is borne of the Spirit, there is twenty borne of the flesh.

Thirdly, It is a practise that overthrowes, and destroys the body of Christ, or holy temple of God; for in time it will come to consist of naturall, and so a nation, and so a nationall Generation, & carnall members, amongst whom if any godly be, they will be brought in bondage, and become subjects of scorn & contempt, and the power of government rest in the hands of the wicked.

Fourthly, because it is a ground both of ignorance and error, for it holds people in blindness, that they cannot come to know the nature of that holy ordinance, nor what the same requires in the subjects thereof: & also it causes the simple to conceive that Baptisme is of necessity to salvation.

Fifthly, it keeps up the State of Antichrist, by granting him this so chiefe a corner-stone of the Lords house to lie in his foundation; for that Church where Baptisme is the true ordinance of God, in the administration thereof, is by the Rules of the Gospel a true Church; so that, if Antichrists Baptisme which he administers be Gods ordinance, then that Church wherein he doth so administer the same, must be also the Church of God, and in sin that refuseth communion with it.

Sixthly, Because it builds faith upon humane testimony in matters fundamentall; for such as are baptized in their infancy, have no other way to satisfie either themselves, or others, but the bare word of man, that must stand in the place of the word of God, for such to beleeve their true receiving of so holy ordinance of God,

Seventhly, To Baptize Infants, makes the holy ordinance of God a lying signe, because none of those things can be expected in an Infant which the said ordinance holds forth or signifies in the administration thereof, which is the parties regeneration and spirituall new birth; a dying and burying with Christ in respect of sin, and a rising with him in a new life to God, and a confirmation of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, and a free remission of sinne by the same; as *Rom. 6. 3, 4. Col. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 21. Aët. 2. 38.* None of all which can be expected in an Infant.

Eightly, Because the subject of Baptisme is to be passive, but an Infant is no way passive, as that ordinance requires. I meane a passive subject theefold: 1. a thing incapable, and thus is a stone. 2. a thing forced, and thus is an Infant, who opposeth its Baptisme to the utmost of its abilitie, so farre is it from being passive in the same. 3. A thing is passive by a subjecting power producing the same in the subject, by bringing it to a free and voluntary subjection; and thus is the true subject of Baptisme. None can be passive to receive grace, but by grace, because it consists of self-deniall.

And lastly, this doctrine of Infants Baptisme opposes directly the expresse word of God, by teaching that Infants are in the covenant of grace, being borne of beleeving parents, and so an holy seed, by vertue of which they have right to Baptisme as a privileged of grace. Against which the holy Ghost affirms, that all are conceived in sinne, brought forth in iniquitie, and so by nature children of wrath, and under the curse, and except they be borne againe from above, they cannot see the Kingdome of God, *Psal. 51. 5. Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 10, 13, 14. Job. 3. 3, 5, 6. Job. 1. 12, 13.* Here man saith, that Infants are cleane and holy, in and from the wombe, and so are subjects of grace and glory: but God saith that all Infants as well one as another, are first in sinne, and unholy, and so are subjects of wrath, untill the second birth makes the difference; as *Job. 3. 5, 6.* And now which to beleeve, let the upright heart to God judge.

*But it is said, that as the Covenant was made to the Jews and their seed under the old Testament, so in the same manner doth the Apostle apply the said Covenant to beleevers and their seed in the new Testament; as Aët. 2. 39.*

*Ans.* The words are not, unto your seed, but unto your children: wherein there is great difference. For by seed in the Scripture is very often put for a naturall generation, begotten and born after the flesh. And by children, a spirituall generation, walking in the steps of the faith of such as have gone before them: as *Aët. 3. 25. Aët. 13. 26, 33.* and so *Job. 8. 37, 39.* with *Rim. 9. 7, 8.* and so the words import as much, which is to you and to your children, and to all as farre off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. So that the promise is onely to such as God shall call, and to none else.

Again, its called the promise, and not the Covenant; and we know that every promise is not a covenant: there being a large difference between a promise and a covenant. And now let it be well considered what is here meant by the promise, and that is Gods sending of the Messias, or the seed in whom the Nations should be blessed; and so the sending of a Saviour or Redeemer unto Israel, as these Scriptures manifest compared together: *Isa. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6.* with *Luke 1. 68, 74. Aët. 13. 23. Aët. 3. 25, 26.* This was performed by Christs coming first in the flesh, in which respect he came both of and to the Jews onely by promise: as *Job 4. 22. Rom. 9. 5. Matth. 10. 5, 6. Matth. 15. 24. Job. 1. 11.*

Secondly in the preaching of the Gospel, by which he was held forth as a Saviour to all that by faith laid hold upon him, as the arm of Gods grace stretched out unto them. And this way also Christ was first tendered to the Jews for a Saviour, to save them from their sins: *Aët. 4. 12.* and for to be their King, as to save them: so unto whose state and government they were to submit, as *Luk. 19. 14, 27. Aët. 2. 36.* In which sense the Apostle speaks when he saith, the promise is to you and to your children, and to all farre and neer, as God shall call, that is, the promise or promised Saviour is come, and is now according to Gods promise tendered to you by the Gospel, calling you, and your children, and all else where the word of grace shall come, to beleeve and re-



ceive him by faith who is now come to save you, and all that beleeve from their sins. *Act. 3. 25, 26.* And therefore its said, as many as gladly received, or beleeved this glad tidings, the same was sealed, or confirmed unto them by baptism, *Act. 2. 41.* according to *Joh. 1. 11, 12, 13.* By all which it is manifest, that the promise, *Act. 2. 39.* is meant the sending of the Messias, or a Saviour to the house of Israel, to call them to repentance, and to save such as beleeve from their sins, as is clear also by these Scriptures. *Isa. 59. 20. Act. 13. 23, 26, 31, 38, 39.* And thus the promise is unto you and your children, that is, the promised Saviour is offered, and offers himself freely to save you: notwithstanding your crucifying of him, yet now repent and beleeve, for his promise is upon the same, freely to forgive, and to save you from all your sins. Thus the promise is applied to faith, which is the way of preaching the Gospel, and not an absolute conclusion of persons to be in the covenant of grace and life, whether they have faith or not. What is this but to keep the wicked from leaving of his way, by promising him life. This God did not in making of his Covenant at the first, nor the Apostle by his applying of the same at the last. Otherwise to bring the personall or naturall seed of *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, and so of all beleevers into the Covenant of grace, and that by Gods appointment, whose word is like himself, both true and stable as a word of faith; purely tried as gold seven times in the fire.

Hence observe the evils that attend this doctrine unavoidably. First it makes void the stability of Gods Covenant of grace it self, thus: If the Covenant of grace be absolute and stable, then all within the same must be saved. But all within the said Covenant were not saved: ergo, the Covenant of grace is not absolute and stable. The major is confessed, that a beleevers seed is in the Covenant of grace without exception. The minor is proved from *Ishmael, Esau*, and the rejected Jews, all which were the seed of beleevers, and yet not all saved.

2. Its a ground of falling from grace, thus: All that God took into his Covenant of grace, were in an estate of grace. But all that God took into his Covenant of grace, did not there continue. Ergo, such fell from an estate of grace. I prove this the same way with the former.

3. Its a ground of universall redemption, for it makes the death of Christ equall as well to such as perish as to such as are saved: thus. All that are in the Covenant of grace, Christ died for. But all that were in the Covenant of grace were not saved. Ergo, Christ died for such as are not saved. The proof of this is the same with the former, if God took *Abraham* and his seed into his Covenant of grace without exception.

4. It makes God the author of mans beleeving untruth, by injoyning him to beleeve the salvation of such as he himself knows, and reveals the contrary: as *Ishmael, Esau*, and but a remnant among the Jews; nay none at all but such as beleeve. *Gen. 17. Gen. 25. Gen. 48. Rom. 9. 27.* Against which opinion and evils aforesaid, I argue thus. The Covenant of grace is absolute and saving unto all once within the same. But all the personall seed of beleevers are not saved: therefore all beleevers seed are not in the Covenant of grace. The Proposition is clear from these Scriptures. *Jer. 32. 40. Isa. 49. 21. Jer. 31. 3. Joh. 13. 1. Mal. 3. 6. Joh. 10. 28, 29.* The Assumption from these. *Gen. 21. 10.* with *Gal. 4. 29, 30. Gen. 25. 23.* with *Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13, 17.* God requires no man to beleeve untruth. But for a beleever to beleeve that all his seed is in the Covenant of grace, is to beleeve untruth. Therefore God requires no such thing. This Argument is fully proved in the former. And so much for the promise, *Act. 2. 39.* which being well understood, men would never go about to build the baptizing of the Gentiles infants upon that Scripture.

But it is said that Christ admits of little children to come unto him, blessing them, and acknowledging their right unto the kingdom of God, *Mark 10. 14.* therefore such may be baptised.

To which I answer briefly thus. That the blessing of Christ upon these children was for bodily cures, as is manifest by the desires of those that brought them to Christ; which was not that he should baptise them, but that he would touch them, and lay his hands upon them, and pray, as *Mark 5. 23. Mat. 19. 13, 15.* This was the ordinary way of healing in the time of the Law,

by such as were inabled by God thereunto, as is clear by these Scriptures compared together. *2. King. 5. 11. with Marth. 19. 13. Marth. 8. 3. Marth. 9. 18. Luk. 4. 38. 40.* Never were any so brought to Christ but for some cure, and for his blessing of them; that was in respect of that temporall mercie he bestowed upon them according to that they came to him for: and to shew his bountie and humilitie that he was no respecter of persons; as such might seem to be, that suffered others to come, and would have kept back children. And for such to belong unto the kingdom, so those children did, and therefore they ought to come as well as any other. For they were children of the Jews, and at that time members of that Church, and so of that kingdome; and had as much interest in Christ for outward blessings as any else.

And further, Christ is pleased to make use of childrens humilitie and innocencie, to reprove the high mindednesse of his disciples, and to draw them forth a pattern from the same. As *Mat. 18. 1, 2, 3, 4.* with *Mark 10. 5.* So that all this makes nothing for the baptizing of Infants: they being not brought to Christ for baptisme.

*But its further objected, that the Apostles baptized whole households, as the household of Stephanas, Lydia, and the Jayler, 1 Cor. 1. 16. Act. 16. 15 33. and infants being a part of the household, therefore infants were baptized.*

*Answer.* Though that Infants are a part of the family when there be infants in the same; yet this makes nothing for the baptizing of Infants, except it be first proved that infants were there in those households. And also upon the same ground we may prove that the Jayler had a wife, and *Lydia* an husband, because that husbands and wives are commonly in a household or family, and being there they are a part of the same. and that the Jaylers wife, and *Lydia*s husband and servants, though never so wicked, were all baptized. But if it be said that faith was to be required of them being of years. Hence it will follow, that no infants were then baptized, because that one and the same condition is required of all that are baptized: and so it is said of the Jayler, that the Word was preached to him, and to all that were in his house; and that he beleaved, and all his house: and these are said to be baptized, *Act. 16. 32. 34.* and thus the Apostle preached, and they beleaved, and such onely were baptized, and none else. And what the Apostles order and practise was in this family, it was the same in all other households and families; for they walked alwayes by one rule: and therefore their order was not to baptise infants.

*It is said, that Christ sent out his Apostles to teach and to baptize all Nations, Matth. 28. 19. in which Nations there were infants as well as men of years, and so commanded to be baptized.*

*Ans.* In a word briefly to this: for this Scripture being well considered, and rightly understood, would stop mens mouthes for ever having a word to say for the baptizing of infants. This blessed commission of Christ to his Apostles was chiefly for us Gentiles, saying, *All power is given me in heaven, and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost. &c.* As if Christ had said, Go now into all Nations, and preach the Gospel freely, as well to one nation as to another; for the Gospel shall not now be confined any more to one place or people, then to another. God is now a God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews; go therefore as well to the Gentiles as to the Jews, even unto all Nations, and there preach the Gospel, and so make Disciples by teaching them; and such so taught, them baptize in the Name of the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost; that is, into the true and orderly profession of that which they have been taught and beleaved. So that here teaching goes before baptizing, and presupposeth understanding and faith in that which is taught; this being the onely place of Christs instituting the ordinance of baptisme. And further explained, *Mark 16. 15. 16. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that beleeveth and is baptized shall be saved.* So that from these Scriptures brought to prove the baptizing of infants, it is clearly manifest that infants are not the subjects of baptisme appointed by Christ: for all the externall benefits and priviledges of the Gospel are given onely to externall and visible faith. And so the

sealing and confirming ordinances of Christ, ever presuppose faith in the subject, to scale unto, and to be confirmed. So that here is no ground for the baptizing of Infants, but the contrary.

But it is affirmed by some, that as God commanded Infants to be circumcised, and the same command remaining still unrepealed, stands in force for Infants to be baptized. To which I answer, and say, if that commandment must serve now without alteration, then we must circumcise and not baptize, and that males onely, and not females; but if it be altered, then it hath not the same way to hold Infants forth in Baptisme, as it had in Circumcision; but that command, which injoynd circumcission, is repealed by a direct command to the contrary, as *Gal. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 7. 18. Rom. 2. 28, 29.*

*If any object, from the second Commandment, injoyning the worship of God, though the said worship of God be changed in respect of the manner and outward forme, yet the same commandment continues still in force for the worship of God now as it did then.*

The answer is, These two commandments will no way agree so to be compared; the second commandment directly injoynd Gods worship, as the substance thereof, and so still remains, and also retains the same thing it first commanded, being the worship of God. But now for the command that injoynd circumcission, which was the substance of that command, is now cleane made voyde; for circumcission in the flesh is now abolished, & that in the heart come in the place; as *Rom. 2. 28, 29. Col. 2.* Again, as the old outward forme of Gods holy worship under the old Testament was abolished and done away, so likewise the new order and forme of Gods worship was erected and set up againe by speciall command; and when the manner of it is once set downe, then the commandment comes on againe, and not before, and binds onely to that order and manner so erected, and set up, and to none else, so that now the new state of the Church and worship of God being established, and the subject of Baptisme in the same, expressed to be a beleever. Now if that commandment comes on upon this state, then it binds to this subject onely and to none other. And to hold the subject of Baptisme by the same command, that injoynd circumcission, without the said subject being expressly set downe, and so confirmed and established by the New Testament; this is more then will be granted in any other part of Gods worship injoynd, or comprehended in the second commandment. All which say we, is so farre approved of by God, as is expressly set downe in the New Testament, or everlasting Gospel of Christ.

But let us examine a little wherein the authoritie of that commandment of circumcission may be, that is brought to beare out the baptizing of Infants: Circumcission it doth not, for all agree that we are now to baptize, and not to circumcise: the parties circumcising it doth not, then the Master of the family to circumcise; but now one authorized by Christ in his body the Church to baptize; the same part of the body it doth not, that the foreskin Baptisme the whole man; the age it doth not, that the eight day, and this any day; the subject it doth not, that a male onely, this both male and female. Now in that it doth not injoyne none of all these, wherein then can the authoritie of that command consist now in Baptisme, so as to injoyne Infants to be baptized; for either it must be a thing indifferent, or else it must injoyne something. And whereas men cry out from that command, Infants, Infants, Infants must be baptized, as they were commanded to be circumcised: why this command if it should be so, serves for none but onely males; so that if they will have the female to be baptized, they must look out for another commandment for them, and so there must be two commandments meet in one ordinance.

But I would demand of such as hold the baptizing of Infants from the command that injoynd circumcission, that if in case there had been no word or command given for baptizing of any, whether that they, or any other, might have baptized either Infants or any others from that commandment; but I suppose they will not so affirme, and if not, what doe men wander under the clouds of their own ignorance, when as the light shines so clearely, for what is more cleare then this, that the New Testament hath sufficient expresse commands and rules for the administration

of Baptisme, both for matter and manner, without any reference, much lesse dependency upon the law of Circumcision, they being two distinct institutions. At two severall times there is given command for Baptisme; the first was *John the Baptist*, who received his authoritie not from the command of Circumcision, but had his Commission expressly from God, who sent him to baptize; as *Joh. 1. 32. 33.* And those that he baptized are said by the holy Ghost to be such as manifested their faith and repentance; as *Mat. 3. 6.* The second Commission which serves for us Gentiles, is that which Christ gave to his Apostles, *Mat. 28. 18. 19.* Which hath no reference to the command of circumcision, but by vertue of that power and authoritie given him of the Father, for the ordering and disposing of all things in heaven & earth, for his own glory and his peoples good. In which Commission the subjects of Baptisme are expressly set downe, who they should baptize, and they are onely such as first were to be taught, and had faith to beleieve the same, as I have sufficiently proved.

And now having these expresse commands, so fully held forth by Christ himselfe, together with the whole practicall order of the Apostles, & others following the same in their administrations, and to goe about to bring authoritie or command from the commandment of circumcision, for the baptizing of Infants, is more then ignorance, and for to plead the baptizing of Infants, because that command is not repealed, which injoynd Infants to be circumcised, is too weake for faith to build upon. But now I hope the removall of the same appears, in that there is not onely a command in the new Testament directly against the same, but also a new command, and so a law from Christ the King of Saints, and Lord of the new Testament, for the ordinance of Baptisme, and all the circumstances of the same. And yet for the further repealing of that law which injoynd Infants naturally borne, and so from the wombe to be circumcised, without minding any other spirituall birth, but onely that which brought forth the childe in the world; for 8. dayes after it must be circumcised by command from God; which order is opposed by the Gospel, as *Joh. 3. 3. 5. 6.* Where Christ opposeth the two births, the spirituall to the naturall birth, and excludes the naturall from any admittance into the Kingdom of God, without the spirituall birth. And that he might not be mistaken, he further explains himself, saying, *1. bat which is borne of the flesh is flesh, and that which is borne of the spirit is spirit.* And further to know Christs meaning in these births, which he opposeth the one to the other, he fully holds forth, *Joh. 1. 13.* in these words of such as received him, *which were borne, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh; nor of the will of man, but of God.*

This way and order the commandment of circumcision speaks nothing of, neither required the same, but onely the first birth; for no childe of 8. dayes old was capable to be borne againe of the Spirit, in our Saviours sense. And thus the Gospel excludes that which the law of circumcision commanded, even the first birth which is naturall, without the second birth which is spirituall. And it is in vaine for any to say that Christ speaks here of men of yeares; for he opposeth the two births, as aforesaid, and not the age of any, and so the whole universe of mankind: for this place is generally taken for the doctrine of regeneration, from whence many hold that children are regenerated in Baptisme. But generally those that baptize their Infants, hold that they are regenerated before, for they baptize them as being holy before. And if any shall say, that the Kingdome Christ speaks of, is meant the Kingdome of glory, and not of grace; and therefore though he excludes such out of the one, yet not out of the other. The answer is, that it is no where found in the Gospel, that any are excluded the kingdome of glory, and yet are admitted into the kingdome of grace. The doore of grace in this sense, is no wider then the gate of glory by Gods appointment: and what men doe through ignorance, that alters not the truth of God, as *Rom. 8. 30.*

And if any say, that Christ at this time had opposed Gods ordinance of circumcision, if such a truth had been put in execution, as is gathered from his words, to exclude and put by an Infant of



To this I answer, and say, that Christ speaks of many things before his death, which did not concerne the time present, but of the order and government of his Church under the new Testament. And so he speaks here of the qualification of his subjects and worshippers in his new kingdom that was at hand; all which was to be spirituall, and therefore to be borne of the spirit, as Christ affirmed. In which sense circumcision in the flesh ceased, and that of the heart onely remains, as *Rom. 2.* Adde to this the words of the Apostle, *Eph. 2. 3.* *We are,* saith he, *all by nature children of wrath:* Now if this be true, then so long as nothing else appears, how can we judge otherwise, without gainsaying the holy Ghost; and by the words of Christ, we are first borne of the flesh, and so in an estate of nature, untill grace recover us, and the effects of Christs redemption takes hold upon us. Untill which time we are judged of the Apostle to be children of wrath, and of the flesh, and so uncleane, and no uncleane thing must come into the holy Citie of grace and glory, *Rev. 21.* All which being well considered, I thinke will put a stop to the commandment of circumcision, from having any footing in the ordinance of Baptisme, or for any to take a ground from hence to justify their Infants in their Baptisme, untill some evidence appeares of their being inwardly washed in the blood of Christ, that so the same may be confirmed unto them by that outward washing with water; otherwise the ordinance is no way available to them, but sinne in such as impose the same upon them, who doe neither desire it, nor know what is done unto them, which is to set a seale to a blanke, a thing condemned in nature.

And so I passe from this subject, of Infants Baptisme, desiring the Lord abundantly to extend his saving grace unto as many as belongs to him, that the praise may ever abound to his glory, and their everlasting comfort in all happines and safetie here, and glory hereafter.

*We know no man after the flesh,* 2 Cor. 5. *We are the circumcision, that worship God in the spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,* Phil. 3. *Marvell not that I say, a man must be borne againe, before he can enter into the Kingdome of God,* Joh. 3.

And thus I desire to have Infants ever in honourable and reverent respect, so farre as honour and reverence belongs unto them, and so leave them to the grace and good pleasure of the God of all grace, who onely knows who are his, and hath the disposing of them, and all his creatures to his own glory, so be it, *Amen.*

And now having examined the visible right that infants have to baptisme, and finding none by the Word of God but the contrary; I come now to a second sort, and they are such as have been baptized in a false Antichristian estate, as they say, and so challenge right to enter upon or assume a true Church with the same baptisme they received of the man of sin. So that the thing I deal with now is onely that opinion which holds a state to be false and Antichristian; and yet Baptisme there administred by an Antichristian power to be the true ordinance of God: and so leave the state as false, and retain their baptisme received there as a true ordinance of God. And for a more orderly proceeding in this discourse, I shall first set down my dissent, and the causes of it; and then examine those grounds that are brought for the proving of the contrary.

And first for that ordinance of Baptisme, which as aforesaid hath been administred, and received in a false Antichristian estate, and retained the true ordinance of God; and such so baptized by the power of the man of sin, to be admitted into the Church of Christ with the same baptisme as the Lords ordinance. This I cannot assent unto, because I see no such thing in all the Word of God, by which I must be guided here, and judged hereafter. So that I dissent from that baptisme administred by the power of Antichrist, and cannot own the same for Gods ordinance appointed by him, and instituted by Christ in the new Testament, and that for these and the like reasons.

First, because in so doing, I shall approve of Antichrists matter and form, and so of the state it self. As an infant for his matter, and the words with water applied, his form. I have already proved that an infant is not the subject of baptisme appointed by God, though it be the child of

a beleever: but how much lesse such who are the carnall seed of the wicked. The covenant of grace and the parents faith is alledged to inright the former unto baptism; but what inrights these unto it, and how came they by it?

Secondly, the ordinance of baptism instituted by Christ is so essentiall to the constitution of the Church under the new Testament, that none can be true in her constitution without it. Neither can that be a false Church where baptism is truly the Lords ordinance in the administration thereof; as *1 Cor. 12. 13.* with *Gal. 3. 27.* So that to approve of Antichrists baptism to be Gods ordinance, is to approve of his Church to be also the Church of God. For as the eaters of the sacrifice were of old partakers of the Altar, *1 Cor. 10. 17, 18.* and to receive him that is sent is a receiving also of him that sent him, *Mat. 13. 40.* so it is with this essentiall ordinance of baptism in the church of Antichrist; that whosoever approves of the one, by the same he approves of the other also. For the ground and pillar that bears up the truth, and that truth so born up, stands and falls together: as *1 Tim. 3. 15.* So that where there is not a true constituted Church, there is no true constituted Church ordinance: and where there is a true Church ordinance in its constitution, as baptism is, there is at least presupposed a true Church also. And therefore to condemne a Church to be false, and altogether Antichristian, and yet baptism there, and by the same administred, to be the ordinance of God; this I can see no rule for in Scripture: and therefore I dissent.

Thirdly, Christ hath disclaimed and denieth all communion with the man of sin, both in respect of himself and his subjects; and hath also proclaimed open warre against him in all his dominions: and therefore he calls home his subjects, as *Jer. 51. 6. 45.* *Revel. 18. 4.* Christ refuseth to be laid as a chief corner stone under Antichrists building, as he must be if he in his holy ordinance of baptism be granted to lie in his foundation: For baptism is no otherwise Christs ordinance but as it depends upon him the ordainer. But Christ denies Antichrist any such priviledge, and also forbids his people from taking a stone from Babylon to lay in the foundation of the Lords building; as *Jer. 51. 26.* But if Antichrists church be of himself, and so false; then all the parts thereof must be of his own devising, and false also. For if in opposition to a true Church of Christ, there is a false church of Antichrists: which thing cannot be, if there be not in opposition to true ordinances of the one, false ordinances of the other, that are essentiall to the same, as the ordinance of baptism is. And so the like ministry proportionable to the same, as *1 Cor. 10. 21. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15.* *Revel. 2. 2.* according to *Matth. 24. 24.* with *2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.*

Fourthly, I cannot approve of that baptism in the church of Antichrist to be Gods ordinance, because in so doing I shall advance humane testimony above the Word of God. For I have no way to satisfie my conscience whether I have that ordinance or no, but onely by Antichrists Church-book, or my godfathers & godmothers: which if the one be dead and the other lost, then am I to seek my baptism. But at the best if any should demand of me whether I were baptized or not: all that I can say is; that men tell me so; in all which Christ must have no voice, and the Word of God put to silence, as knowing no such thing: and Antichrists Church-book come in the place, as a ground of my faith in a truth so essentiall. Which thing I dare not approve of.

Fifthly, to justifie baptism in the church of Antichrist to be Gods ordinance, is to force men to sin against conscience; for if any man comes unto such for fellowship in the truth, he must either justifie the baptism he received of the man of sin, as Gods ordinance, or else continue in that sinful way in which he is, and desires to leave; I speak now in their sense whose praise it is, which I cannot at all assent unto for a truth.

Sixty, I cannot justifie Antichrists baptism for Gods ordinance, because it makes against Christs baptism in these two respects. First, for the power by which the same was constituted, and so authorized in the hand of the Minister, being the power of the man of sin, rejected of God as an enemy to the crown and dignitie of Christ the King of Saints. Secondly, in respect of that body

body into which the partie was baptized, and so by the same made a visible member, and that was in the body of Antichrist. In both which respects the baptism administered in the false Antichristian state, in my judgement cannot be the ordinance of God.

And lastly, I dare not go from that rule and order which Christ left in his last Testament, for the constituting of his Church, and taking of members into the same, which is by faith and baptism. All which grounds being well considered, I cannot see by any rule of truth to approve of the baptism administered in a false Antichristian church to be Gods ordinance, instituted by Christ in his new Testament. That being there administered under a false power by a false ministry upon a wrong subject in a false body, and yet the same Gods ordinance; this is more then I can find by the Word of God, from which rule I dare not go.

Thus having shewed my judgement, and some reasons why I so judge of the baptism administered in a false Antichristian estate, cannot be the ordinance of God, instituted by Christ in the Gospel. And now I come to give answer to some of the chief grounds brought for the proving of the foresaid baptism in the hand of Antichrist to be the ordinance of God.

*And first it is said, that as Circumcision administered in Israels great apostasie remained still the ordinance of God; so that when any of them did repent, and turned unto the Lord, they were received without being circumcised again: and the like is now to be considered of baptism in the apostasie of Antichrist.*

The answer is, first it is like to be a bad cause that must be maintained from the corruptions of other persons or states: Is the order and government of Christs new state and kingdom under the new Testament more weak and imperfect then that under the old, as we must go still unto Circumcision for a rule how to make out our baptism? Is the light of the Moon become now more brighter then the light of the Sunne; and the heart veiled to see clearer then the face open, and the servant to teach the Son? Again, it is worth our consideration, from what church Antichrist did apostasie, and go away from, as the ten Tribes did under *Jeroboam*, 1 *King*. 12. But I passe this.

Secondly, I answer, that Circumcision was not confined in the hand of the priesthood then under the old Testament, as the administration of baptism is to the ministry of Christ now under the new Testament.

Thirdly, Circumcision was then by them administered according as God had commanded the same to be, both in respect of the matter and manner. 1. The same order. 2. A right subject. 3. The due time. 4. the true place. And lastly, a lawfull Minister. But now the baptism administered by Antichrist is contrary in all the foresaid respects, which is by a false power upon a wrong subject, by a false Minister in a false body. The like cannot be shewed in circumcision, nor yet in baptism, and God approving of the same to be his ordinance. And now to oppose this, *Zipporah* the wife of *Moses* is brought for an example, to prove that the baptism administered by a false Minister may be true baptism, as circumcision was being administered by a woman. *Exod.* 4. 25.

The answer is, first, that *Moses* wife was in that action the hand of her husband for the preserving of his life: for had not *Zipporah* circumcised her son it seemes that God had slaine her husband; as *ver.* 24, 25, 26. compared together.

Secondly, herein God sets forth his wisdom and justice in the subjecting of his creature, to bring her so farre to submit unto his will in that ordinance, as for to do the thing her self; for whose sake it is like the same was so long neglected, because there was nothing so contrary and opposite unto her then Circumcision.

Thirdly, I see not but that in a case of necessity a woman might lawfully circumcise, she being no where prohibited.

And lastly, what of all this, say she did it unlawfully, and in so doing she was a false Minister;

all which is more then God saith, yet this was not done in a false Church, upon a wrong subject, authorised by a false power, as baptism administered by Antichrist is, and therefore at the worst it makes nothing at all for that which it is pretended, namely, to prove baptism administered by Antichrist the ordinance of God, though the same be also administered by a false Minister.

*Again it is said, that the Scriptures are the ordinance of God, which he hath ever preserved, and still owns for his ordinance in hand of Antichrist: and so doth God of baptism there also.*

To which I answer and say, that God indeed doth preserve the Scriptures, wherein is contained all Gods holy ordinances, as they are therein comprehended, and laid forth in their instituted rules, and that in the hands of wicked men, and so in the hands of Antichrist himself. But never in their constituted order and forms out of the hand of Christ his Church and ministry. And though that in many things Antichrist hath corrupted the Scriptures, yet they remaine still in themselves the ordinance of God. But for the false expositions, glosses, and doctrines they gather from the Scriptures, with the Church ministry, worship and government they build upon the Scriptures; and so their ordinances which they seem to constitute by them: now these I cannot see to be the ordinances of God any more the one then the other. So that if baptism with Antichrist, as they say, be Gods ordinance, then why not upon the same ground the Supper, Church and Ministry, be Gods ordinances also, seeing they have the Scriptures as well for the one as for the other? And for baptism, as it is an institution of Christ, and contained in the Scriptures, as a rule for the Lords people to walk by in their obedience to him; onely so considered it is an ordinance of God, in whose hand soever the Scriptures are.

But now for a false Antichristian Church, to constitute and administer the like out of or apart from the Scriptures. Now so considered, it is not the ordinance of God, but mens invention, composed from the Scriptures, as a patern drawne forth in the likenesse or resemblance of Gods ordinance, but not the same. For God hath communion with none in his word, but by his Spirit and saith; neither of which hath Antichrist, and therefore though he hath the written Letter of the Scriptures, yet no communion with God in the same, so as to receive his ordinance of him: neither can any man constitute, and so administer an ordinance of God without authoritie from Christ the Lord and King of his Church; which authoritie Antichrist hath not, and therefore Gods ordinance of Baptisme cannot be administered by Antichrist in his false Anchristian Church and State, as some doe so affirme.

*But it is said, that there is but onely one Baptisme, and having once received that, though it be by Antichrist, we need not to receive it any more; for we can have but the same againe, and that which we have is the same for substance with Christs institution, which for the matter, there is water, and for the forme, there is the same words used as Christ instituted the same ordinance of Baptisme in.*

The answer is, first, that there is but one true baptism, that is a truth, and a man being once baptized by the same, he needs not to be baptized againe: this is also true, for I doe not approve of rebaptizing. But now to conclude from hence, that there cannot be a resemblance of that one true baptism, and yet not the same, this will not follow: there is but one true Church and Ministry of Christ, as the Word of God reveals. But it will not follow therefore, that Antichrist cannot resemble the same, and set up one of his own like unto that, or if that he doe, the same must be a true Church and Ministry, because God approves but of one.

But if Antichrist (as you affirme) may resemble the truth, and set up a false Church and Ministry, which is the greater. Upon the same ground doe I affirme, that he may, nay, that he must also resemble the true ordinances, by setting up false ordinances, which are the lesser, like unto the true, otherwise he could not put off his ware, for none would trade with him in his merchandise.

Secondly, Antichrist hath not the substance of Gods holy ordinance in his baptism, though he use, or rather abuse the words of Christs institution in his administration, for then he should also have the substance of all other ordinances of God, because he useth the words of the Scrip-



ture, wherein they are instituted and contained. It is not the bare letter of Scripture onely, but the true minde of Christ there set downe, that bears an ordinance, which none can know, but onely he who hath the Spirit of Christ, as *Rom. 8. 1 Cor. 2.* and this hath not Antichrist.

Thirdly, I deny the water to be the matter, but onely the instrument in Baptisme; for as fire is the instrument of burning, even so is water of washing; and as the matter of burning is the fewell that is burnt, so the matter of washing is the partie washed; for as the matter of the Church is the Saints, and the matter of the Ministry, the Prophets, so the matter of baptisme, are the persons upon whom the same is conferred.

Fourthly, I deny the forme of words, with the use of water, in a false Antichristian Church, to be the forme of the Lords baptisme, instituted by Christ in the new Testament; for then every foolish using of them words with water, must be the true ordinance of God, as many ignorantly doe affirme. But for the forme of Baptisme, that is, authorized person, baptizing the true matter into the true and orderly profession of Jesus Christ, as *Mat. 28. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 27.* This being thus done by a true power and authoritie from Christ, is the forme of baptisme in the administration thereof; but this doth not Antichrist, and therefore his baptisme is not Gods ordinance.

*The next ground alledged to prove Baptisme administred in a false Antichristian Church, to be the true ordinance of God, and so to be retained, is the vessels of Gods house in Babylon, that as those vessels remained still the Lords ordinance being in the hands of Gods enemies; and so may Baptisme, as a vessell of Gods house, being in the hand of Antichrist, which is spirituall Babylon.*

I shall answer to this in brieve: first, for the vessels of the Lords house, they were Gods ordinance, and that whiles they were in *Babylon*, but not so as they onely consisted in their instituted formes, and not in respect of their constituted use: that is, as *Belshazzar* the King and his Princes made them their drinking cups, as *Dan. 5. 2. 3.* Thus considered with respect to this use and service that the *Babylonians* applyed them unto, they were not the ordinance of God, for God never ordained them for such a use. Though in themselves simply considered they were Gods ordinance, ordained by him to holy use. In which consideration Baptisme may be said to be Gods ordinance in the Church of Antichrist, or where soever the holy Scriptures of God are; onely as an instituted Rule in the word of God; for his owne people to observe, and obey him, by using it in that way, and to the same end, as God ordained and appointed the same ordinance unto.

But now for Antichrist to take the Scriptures, and according to his right of authoritie and spirit, shall from the same compose a forme of worship, with ordinances suitable thereunto. Among which Baptisme must be one, without which all the rest are nothing worth. Now though that Baptisme as a holy institution of Christ, contained in the Scriptures, be the ordinance of God, yet considered in Antichrists constitution, and false administration, it is not the ordinance of God, no more then the Princes of *Babylons* drinking in the vessels of the Lords house was his ordinance.

Again, secondly, God is said in the Scriptures to give or to send the vessels of his house to *Babylon*; as *2 Chron. 36. 17. 18. 21. Jer. 27. 21, 22. Dan. 1. 2.* Now let the like be shewed, where ever God is said to give or to send his ordinance of baptisme unto Antichrist, untill then the vessels of Gods house remaining his ordinance in *Babylon*, shall make nothing for them to prove Antichrists sprinkling of water in the face of an Infant, to be Gods ordinance of Baptisme.

But here it is said by some, that Antichrist as a thiefe hath stolne away Gods ordinance of Baptisme out of his Church, for which he is said not to have repented of his theft; as *Rev. 9. 21.*

If this should be true, herein they condemne themselves, for whosoever communicates with the thiefe in the thing stolne, he is as deepe in the sinne as the thiefe himselfe.

But it will be said, that they having repented of the evill, God hath accepted of that, though they retain their Baptisme, as his ordinance.

How can this be? which way doth their repentance appeare? so long as they retain the thing

that is stollen; for nature teaches thus much, that so long as any man keepes in possession that which he knows was stollen, he is guiltie of the theft.

Secondly, How doe such know that God hath accepted of their repentance, while they still retain the thing stollen, & justifie the same; and how can they make it appeare by the word of God, that he approves of that Baptisme for his ordinance, which they have received at the hand of Antichrist? All which is worth the consideration how these things can be made to appeare, that are so commonly taken for granted truths.

Againe, thirdly, Though Antichrist should steale away the Lords baptisme out of his Church, yet he could not steale away the power and authoritie of Christ, for to administer the same upon any other; For though he should bring away Christs baptisme, yet it was but onely in his owne person; which thing he could not passe from himselfe upon any other, as an ordinance of God, without the power and authoritie of Christ.

And lastly, let us consider a little what may be here meant by theft, together with the helpe of other Scriptures, and that is mens bringing in their owne inventions, and humane traditions, and pressing the same for truth upon the consciences of men; by which means the truth of God is dis-planted, and the way of the Lord obscured, and so comes to loose its esteeme and authoritie in the heart of man, as *Gal. 1. 6. 7. & 4. 17.* In which sense the false Prophets are said to steale the word of God every one from his neighbour, as *Jer. 23. 30.* that was by setting up their owne traditions, and pressing the same for truth upon the people; by which means the commandements of God were made of no effect; as *Mat. 7. 13.* Of which the Lord complains that the feare by which the people feared him, was taught by the precepts of men, as *Isa. 29. 13.* This way Satan in his instruments lies at all advantage, to disable and prevent the Word for taking effect upon the hearts of men; as *Mat. 13. 19.* And this is the theft, that the aforesaid thieves and robbers had not repented of, and not Antichrists stealing of the Lords Baptisme out of his Church.

*But it is thought by some, that the gold and rich attire, by which Antichrist is painted, and the golden cup in the Gentlewomens hand, are the ordinances of God, as Rev. 17. 4.*

As there is little matter in this to any purpose, I shall answer in briefto the same. And first, that this is a comparative speech, with reference to that outward pompe and glorious state, wherein shee sits triumphing as a Queene, *Rev. 18. 7.* And withall, the same wisely and cunningly composed by humane policy, under a generall forme of an outward profession of Religion, yet opposing the truth and power thereof, *Cant. 5. 7.* Under a shew of humilitie, and pretence of zeale; by her forwardnesse in the executing of her power, against all such that refuse subjection to her holy orders, and to worship God according to that image and forme which shee hath set up, *Col. 2. 8. 18. 20, 21, 22, 23. Rev. 13. 15, 16.* Thus by her policy shee draws forth her forme in some resemblance of truth, so far as it suits with reason and humane wisdom; and therefore it is, that the greatest Politicians and artificers are of her side, *Rev. 18. 23.* and so carries out things with a strong hand, against all that shall oppose her, *Rev. 13. 4.* and through her great wisdom, art, and policy, shee is exalted, and becomes famous, and in great esteeme for the generalitie of men; as *Ezek. 28. Rev. 13. 3. Rev. 18. 18, 19.* And therefore such are best accepted of her, that are the strongest for reason, and the most skilfulst artificers, to paint, and to trim her up, and to set her forth in her glory and beautie to the eyes of men. And by this means shee as an harlot deceives the simple, and bewitches the Nations, as *Pro. 7. 16, 17. Nahum 3. 4. Gal. 3. 1. Rev. 18.*

All which is to be understood in a spirituall sense, and in matters of Religion, and then her golden cup, and all her rich attire will appeare to be onely of the Gentlewomens own devised paintings, and not any of the Lords ordinances, as *Jer. 51. 7. & Jer. 2. 33.* with *Jer. 4. 30. & Rev. 18. 12, 13. 16.* So that here the holy Ghost sets forth her state to be *Babylon* spirituallly considered, as *Rev. 11. 8.* and her Ministers are set forth under the name of *Merchants*, because they buy and sell & trade for her in all the Merchandise of her Religion, wherein all things are set at sale, as much

as the soules and bodies of men, *Rev.* 18. 13. that is, the penall laws imposed to the forcing of their consciences, & such as are rich to escape for money or friends, but such as are poore or conscious to abide the punishment, as 2 *Pei.* 2. 9. the Merchants are stiled or called *The great men of the earth*, *ver.* 23. that is, great for humane learning, arts, and policy, to keep up her state and trade, and make out the same against all gaine-fayers, and what they want in skill, they have it in power, and so able to beare downe all before them, for they are the great men of the earth, and who is able to make war with the beast. The things they merchandise withall, are all manner of precious stones, and the like, which holds forth the curious art of nature, for the ordering and composing of all those things concurring for the making up of that state and forme, in so neere a resemblance to truth. All which is without substance, for at length no man will buy their ware, which causeth great lamentation among the Merchants, *Rev.* 18. 11. And so I shall now leave this subject to the wise & godly Readers consideration, to mind well the truth of such a practise, that leave a church as false and Antichristian, and yet approve of that Baptisme there administred by a false and an Antichristian power, to be the true ordinance of God.

I must here conclude with Doctor Hall in his *Apologie against the Brownists*, pag. 17. 18. 31. *That either such must goe forward to baptisme, or else turne backe againe from whence they came; for there is no middle way, nor the least light in the word of God to beare out the same, but the contrary.*

*You shall not doe whatsoever is right in your owne eyes, for you are not as yet come to your rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you, Deut.* 12. 8, 9. *Arise and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted, Micah* 2. 10. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever beleeveth on me, should not abide in darknesse, Joh.* 12. 46. *And now why tarrie yee, arise and be baptized, and wash away your (Antichristian) sinnes, calling on the name of the Lord, Act.* 22. 16. or submitting to the order and way of Christ. *They resisted the counsell of God against themselves, being not baptized of him, Luk.* 7. 30. Arise therefore and obey the Lord, and thinke not within your selves, we are baptized already, and that by Antichrist, for I tell you that you are never able to prove your selves to be under the Lords holy ordinance of Baptisme, by all the light in Scripture, and art in nature, in that way you goe, namely, to deny the state as false and Antichristian, and yet retaine your baptisme there administred by the same power, as the Lords ordinance, and assume a Church to your selves upon the same baptisme. I speake in subjection to better judgement, I thinke the last Church is as much against the Rules of the new Testament as the former. For certainly, where there is a false state, constituted by a false power, all that stative ordinances essentiall to the same, and constituted by the same power, must be also of the same nature together with the rest, which is all alike false; therefore if you take hence a corner stone to lay in your foundation, and build you a resting place upon the same, know this, that it will not lie firme, but ever be rousing under you, that you shall not rest long upon it, therefore arise and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted, it will destroy you, even with a fore destruction; look betimes, the higher you build, the greater the fall will be, if it be not right upon the true foundation. I doe beleve that God will cause his truth to shine forth with power, both to cleare the darke clouds of ignorance off the hearts of men, and beare downe that which stands in opposition to the same; and if such hath been so hard put to it, in the darke as it were, that they are forced to leave the holy and blessed word of God, and betake themselves to Antichrists power and testimony, to prove them under Gods holy ordinance of baptisme, though the whole body of the Scripture lies against them, what will such doe when more light comes? they will then yeeld, or else appeare to be wilfull opposers of the truth. The Lord give them hearts to consider, and to put their cause to the tryall of the holy and pure Word of God, and to bring all his people into one unitie of faith, and uniforme order of truth, that God may have glory, the Gospel honour, the Saints comfort.

The subject of the former discourse hath been about the right subject of Baptisme, and that the word of God hath discovered to be a beleever; onely in the proving of which truth, there is also

disproved two sorts of persons, and they are either beleevvers Infants, or such that received their Baptisme of Antichrist, and yet all in their infancy: both which are by the Scriptures disapproved, the one being incapable, and so without any Rule from God for the same; and the other also unlawfull, and so directly against the word of God, which disclaimes all communion with the man of sinne, in any of his divine ordinances, who receives nothing of the Lord, and therefore all that he can administer unto any, is both of himselfe, from himselfe, and for himselfe, and so not to be justified, nor retained as the Lords ordinance. And this falling out so, it followes that we are now to seeke for the Lords true Baptisme, and for a case so difficult, as some would make it, two things in speciall are to be inquired into; first, how, or where to finde it; secondly, how it may be obtained, being found: for the first, if any ordinance of God should be so deceased in its constitution, as that we doe not know where it is afoot in Gods way in the world, so as to come by it with a good conscience. A people in such a case, being convicted of the truth, and the necessitie of their obedience to God in the same, and yet know not the way, or manner how to accomplish their holy desires, in the finding & obtaining the same. They are to goe, as of old, to Christ, and his Apostles, as the godly then did; that is, to the holy Scriptures, which are the lively Oracles of God; the Spirit speaking in them unto a beleaving heart; so they stand in the place of Christ and his Apostles, with the same abilitie & authoritie, to furnish a man of faith with all truth; as these Scriptures compared together sufficiently prove, *2 Tim. 3. 15 16. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 19 20. Rom. 16. 25, 26. 1 Joh. 5. 39. Mat. 22. 29. Luk. 24. 25. 27. 44. 45, 46. 1 Cor. 15. 3. 4.*

By all which we see, that all things are contained in the Scriptures, unto which the holy Ghost leads men to prove and finde all things concerning faith and obedience to God and man, which are the Propheticall mouth of Christ, that all must have recourse unto, that will have any thing to do with him, *Act. 3. 22, 23.* And the Rule by which all must be tryed, though an Angel from heaven, and the Apostles themselves, as *Gal. 1. 8, 9.* So that the holy Scripture is the onely place where any ordinance of God in the case aforesaid is to be found, they being the fountain-head, containing all the instituted Rules both of Church and ordinances, so that, where, or wheresoever any of these are wanting in their constitution, and cannot be found in their outward orderly forme, wee are to go directly unto its institution, and recover the same againe from thence, as *Cant. 1. 7. Isa. 8. 19. 20. Rom. 10. 6, 7 8.* And thus having found the place or subject, wherein baptisme ever subsists, as an ordinance of God, we are in the next place to know, how such as want it may come orderly by it; for though that God hath joyned his word and ordinances together, yet he hath also ordained an orderly way for his people to come to enjoy them, which orderly way I conceive to be only in the Church of God, wherein is the power of Christ to set afoot his ordinances; as when God shall please to take a people to himselfe, and by the power of his truth unite them to his Son, and so into an orderly body among themselves, now such a people, so constituted, have right unto all such privilegedges, ordained and appointed by God, for their mutuall comfort and well-being, as *Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23.* By vertue of this union they have with their head Christ, the body thus joyntly considered, hath the power & authoritie of Christ within her selfe, to chuse and make use of any one, or more of her members, as occasion offers, and authorises him or them to administer baptisme upon the whole body, and so upon themselves in the first place, as apart of the same. Such may be truly said to be sent, and authorized by Christ; as of old by Christ in his humane body, even so now by him in his divine and spirituall body; for wheresoever a Church doth rise in her true constitution, there are her ordinances, and also power to administer the same, and where a thing is wanting, there must be of necessitie a beginning to reduce that thing againe into being. And thus briefly I have shewed my judgement, in case baptisme should be wanting, where we should finde it, and that is in the holy Scriptures of God.

Secondly, How from thence to be obtained, and that is by Gods calling a people into an holy fellowship with Christ, from whom they have power to assume, as a Church, so the ordinance of



Baptisme upon themselves. I shall yet further cleare up this truth, by shewing the manner of the foresaid constitution in the causes of it.

*But before I can doe this, I must give answer to two sorts of persons that oppose the aforesaid truth; first, such as stand for a personall succession; secondly, such as will have no Church before Baptisme, and so make Baptisme the forme of the Church.*

As for the first, that hold Baptisme by personall succession, they have received a sufficient answer, in proving of that Baptisme administred by Antichrist to be none of Gods ordinance; onely a word or two to such as hold a succession in the defection of Antichrist, as they call it, if they meane by defection, the outward forme of worship, and government Ecclesiasticall, as I thinke they doe, then all the power and authoritie that ever hath carried out any administration, or constituted ordinance, hath taken its being thence, and depends upon the same; and if so, then the power and ordainer, and the ordinance so ordained, must be both of one and the same stamp, as I have already proved, if the one be Antichrists, the other must be also Antichristian; and to dreame of any approved Church by the word of God, in, or under this defection, and yet a part of the same, is to look for a man in the Moone, and to suppose a Church to consist in such matter that is destructive to the forme, and therein to hold a succession of truth, is against the very light of nature, and to keep the Pope upon the throne of Christ, whether he will or no; but to lay the chaine of succession of truth this way, namely, through the Popedome of Rome, as all such must doe that hold a personall succession, or a Church, and ordinances to consist in the same, from the Apostles untill now; what will such doe, and where will their succession of truth lie: when the same comes to the woman Pope, of whom the Papists themselves are ashamed; for when we speake of personall succession of truth, as in reference to Church, and Church ordinances, I looke upon this in the power and authoritie that beares the same: and to hold a Church to be true, and the ordinances there administred the true ordinances of God, and to leave this, and set up a way of worship apart from it, and deny communion with it, is in my darke understanding, a meere schisme, and the overthrow of all order in Religion; so far as I have learned Christ, men are to stand in their place, and use all means to reforme and reclaime or disclaime by the word of truth; and all being done, and of necessitie I must by the word of God, leave off communion with them, I think by the same rule, I must disclaime them, and so separate away from them, if they doe not repent, and not to leave a true Church, and true ordinances, and goe apart and erect another Church, ordinances and worship of our selves apart from it, in opposition to it, this in my judgement is as farre from any Rule in the Gospel of Christ, as for a man to baptize himselfe, neither of which doe I approve of. Yet a word, by the way, because of such an error that some make, and how far off from any rule or example, for a man to baptize himselfe, or to baptize others, and himselfe unbaptized, & so thinking hereby to shut up the ordinance of God in such a strait, that none can come by it, but through the authoritie of the Popedome of Rome. But for the opening of this cloud that seems so to darken the skie, let the Reader consider who baptized *John the Baptist*, before he baptized others, and if no man did, then whether he did not baptize others, he himselfe being unbaptized, & if he was baptized, whether it were not by an unbaptized person; and all Scripture being written for our learning, and this being one, we are taught by this what to doe upon the like occasion. And for the continuation of the Church from Christs words, *The gates of hell shall not prevails against it, &c.* I confesse the same with this distinction; which church is to be considered either with respect to her instituted state, as it lies in the Scripture, in the Rules of the foundation, or in her constitution, or constituted forme in her visible order. Against the first hell gates shall never prevaile, the foundation stands sure; but against the last it hath often prevailed, for the Church in her outward visible order, hath been often scattered through persecution, and the like, in which sense she is said to be prevailed against, as *Dan. 7. Rev. 12. Ait. 8. 1.* Otherwise, where was their Church before it came from under the defection.

Again, that which once was in such a way of being, and ceaseth for a time, and then comes to the same estate againe, is, and may truly be said, to have ever a continuance, as *Mat. 22. 31. 32.* with *Luk. 20. 38.* In which sense the Church may truly be said ever to continue; for though the be cast downe at one time, yet God will raise her up at another, so that shee shall never be so pre-vailed against, as to be utterly destroyed. And this way, I suppose, Christ may have & enjoy ever as good a wife as any can be preserved for him under the defection of Antichrist. Though some have so wide mouths open against such as ever wished them well; but I leave them to God, to whom they shall give account of all their hard words against the Lord, & those that fear his name, & out of conscience obey him in that way, as some please to call error, in a reproachfull manner. But men do in these dayes somewhat like to the tyrants in the ten persecutions, whose crueltie was such, that they exposed the Christians to be devoured of wild beasts, and God so overpowred the creatures crueltie, that at length they ceased to hurt them: and when those bloody tyrants saw that, they put Beares-skins upon them, thereby to insence and to stir up the nature of those beasts to fall upon them: thus I have heard reported. But whether this be true or not, sure I am, that such men can be little better minded, that labour so to cover the godly with such filth, as they vomit out of their own selfe-sicke stomackes; but I desire the Lord to passe by all, and to give men more love and patience to beare one with another.

And to conclude, I feare men put more in baptism then is of right due unto it, that so preferre it above the Church, and all other ordinances besides, for they can assume or erect a Church, take in and cast out members, elect and ordain Officers, and administer the Supper, and all anew, without any looking after succession, any further then the Scriptures; but as for Baptisme, they must have that successively from the Apostles, though it comes through the hands of Pope *Joane*. What is the cause of this, that men can doe all from the Word, but onely baptism? and that must come by man, yea, and that by the man of sinne. But we are to know this, that truth depends not upon Churches, nor any mortall creature, but onely upon the immortall God, who by his Word and Spirit reveales the same, when, and to whom he pleases. And for succession of truth, it comes now by the promise of God, & faith of his people, whom he as aforesaid, hath taken out of the world unto himselfe, in the fellowship of the Gospel: to whom the ordinances of Christ stand onely by succession of faith, and not of persons; for the same power and authoritie the Apostles had in their time for direction in godlinesse, the Scriptures have now in the hand of Christ, as the head of his Church, which make up but one body, *1 Cor. 12. 12. 27. Eph. 1. 22, 23. Eph. 4. 15, 16.* So that what the Church and the Apostles together might doe then, the same may the head and body, together with the Scriptures doe now, the Scriptures having the same authoritie in the Church now as the Apostles had then, the same Spirit being present now to reveale them, as then to write them, *1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16.*

The Scriptures remaining in the place of the Apostles for us to have recourse unto, and serve as the mouth of Christ to all beleevers, as the Apostles did before they were written, *Mat. 28. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 19, 20, 21. Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8.* And as the people of old conferred with the Prophets and Apostles about their great affaires, so have the Lords people now *Moses* and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles in their writings, as *Luk. 16. 29, 30, 31.* Which are to us with the Spirit of life in them as effectually, as their personall presence, if not more, as *Joh. 6. 62, 63. 2 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Rev. 11. 3, 5. 11.* And thus all succession from the beginning came to Christ, and from Christ to the Apostles, and from them to the Scriptures, which are the head-spring of all to us; so that, all succession now is onely spirituall, according to faith, and follows not the personall succession of any, but onely the word, that gives being to all order and ordinances that is of God.

And so I come to such as will have no Church before Baptisme, and so make Baptisme the forme of the Church, I shall be brieve in this, because the truth of this will appear in the causes constituting the Church.

This I thinke we all agree in, that matter and forme constitutes a Church, the matter is a com-

pany of Saints, or persons professing faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and living accordingly, that is, in holiness of life. The forme is that by which these are united and knit up together in one fellowship, and orderly body, and that is the covenant of grace that lies between God and his people, by which God visibly becomes the God of such persons, and they his people above all other. That this is the forme of a Church, and not Baptisme, I prove thus; that by which God and a people become each others apart from all other people, that is the forme of them; but the covenant is that by which God owns a people for his, and they him for their God, therefore the covenant is the forme, *Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Ait. 2. 91. Gen. 17. 11. Luk. 1. 72. Ait. 3. 25.*

Secondly, That which at the first was the forme of a thing, ever remains the forme of the same thing without alteration, but the covenant was the forme of the Church at the first, before ever any ordinance was annexed, therefore the same still, the Church remaining the same without alteration in the nature of it.

Thirdly, That which both gives a being to a thing, and ever keeps the same, that must be the forme of the same thing, but the covenant both gave a being to the Church, & ever keeps the same, therefore the covenant is the forme.

Fourthly, That which makes a member to be a member or no member of a Church, that makes a Church to be a Church, or no church, and so that is the forme of it, for there is the same reason for the whole, that is for every part, but the covenant is that which makes a member, and so the rest, as *Esa. 56. 4. 6.* therefore the covenant is the forme.

Fifthly, That w<sup>ch</sup> persons may have, and yet be no church, that cannot be the forme of a church, but persons may have baptisme, & yet no church, *ergo*, not the forme; the church being the greatest ordinance of God, and the very center of all ordinances, as *Psal. 87. 7.* with *1 Tim. 3. 15.* Cannot be formed by any particular ordinance, no nor by any lesse then that which comprehends all the essentiall parts and properties of a church, which is Gods gracious covenant, that gives being to all true churches both first and last.

*But some will say, that the Word speaks of no church before Baptisme.*

For answer to this, I must distinguish in Baptisme between the truth in the doctrine of Baptisme, and the outward administration of the same. In the first sense Baptisme is one branch of the covenant, as a truth to be revealed, and by faith to be received, as an essentiall truth, together with other truths, for the constituting of the church, and no church according to the order of Christs new Testament, either without it, or before it.

But for the last, namely, the outward administration of Baptisme, that ever follows the Saints joyning in fellowship, by mutuall faith & agreement in the doctrine, wherein consists the stating of the Church in her conjoyning in covenant, which ever goes before the administration of Baptisme, and gives power and authoritie for the same. So that in the first sense, the Church is not before Baptisme; but in the last sense, the church is before Baptisme. This distinction being observed, I answer in a word thus; we are not to deny a church to be a church untill the Word so calls it; for the church in the old testament, and most of the churches in the new Testament, were churches sometime before they were so called. And why may not the same be so here, be a church before Baptisme be administered. Again, a church is onely so a church before Baptisme, as that the end of her union, is for communion, and so an immediate proceeding to the practise of the same truth shee agreed upon by a free and mutuall consent in her conjunction. That which states a person or persons in covenant, instates them in church-fellowship: but faith and not practise instates a people in covenant, for a people must first agree upon truth in judgement, before they practise the same, therefore faith and not practise, instates a people in church-fellowship; and so a church in covenant and fellowship before baptisme be administered. A people are a church by covenant, unto which ordinances are annexed, to confirme and establish the same, as *Gen. 17. 11. Ezek. 16. 8. 9. Ait. 3. 41. as Eph. 4. 5.* So that here was a church before ordinances, or that ever Baptisme was administered either by John the Baptist, or the Apostles.

*Some say from Acts 2. 41. They were added to the Church after they were baptized.*

To which I answer and say, If it should be so, that they were after Baptisme added to the Church, then they should neither put on Christ by Baptisme, nor yet be baptized into one body, nor to the true profession of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, &c. directly against these Scriptures, Gal. 3. 27. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Mat. 28. 19. And for *Acts 2. 41.* the words are these: *Then they that gladly received his Word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls;* which is nothing else but to shew how many they were that received the truth, and so by the same were added to them, holding forth the power and goodnes of God, in making his word so fruitfull, in bringing in so many by one Sermon to the truth, as *Acts 2. 47.* which is onely a repeating over the number of Persons God at that time added to the rest.

*Again, it may be said, that Baptisme signifies our regeneration, and new birth, so that a child must be first borne, and brought forth in Baptisme, before it can be made a living Member in Christ's body the Church.*

Baptisme indeed is a signe of the new birth, and so holds forth the same as a thing done, and not as a thing to be done, and therefore Baptisme requires the appearance of the same, as faith and repentance to goe before the administration thereof, which cannot be untill a man be borne from above, and such as are spirituall alive, are the onely subjects of Baptisme. This will be further cleared in the constitution of the Church, which now follows, which constitution is the orderly collection, & conjoyning of persons into the new covenant or visible union with Christ their head, and so consequently into an orderly body among themselves; wherein the Saints are the matter, and the covenant the forme; from which two concurring, the Church ariseth, and is by them constituted, as *Ezek. 16. 8. Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Gal. 3. 18. 19. Heb. 6. 17. Zech. 13. 9.* with *Deut. 26. 16. to 19. Deut. 49. 13. 14. & Rom. 9. 8.* with *Gal. 4. 28.* By which it appears, that it is the promise, or the covenant of grace, that produceth a Christian, and gives him a being in such an estate of grace, as in Church-fellowship, and so consequently the Church it selfe; for that which is true in a part, is the same in the whole.

Now for the constituting causes by which God ordinarily useth to effect this worke; are these:

First, the word of God, which is to fit and prepare the matter for the forme.

Secondly, the confession of faith, which is to declare the fitnessse of the matter for the forme.

Thirdly, the free and mutuall consent and agreement of the particular persons, upon the practise of the same truth beleaved and confessed, as aforesaid.

And lastly, the Spirit of Christ, uniting and knitting up their hearts together, in and by the same truth; and of each of these a word.

First of the Word of God, fitting and preparing of the matter, and this appears in the ministry of *John the Baptist*, who was to goe before Christ in the spirit and power of *Elias*, for to turne the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient unto the wisdom of the just, and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, as *Luk. 1. 17* Compare with this *Luk. 3. 4. 5. 6.* where he is said to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make his paths straight. And now the manner how this is to be done, is to fill up every valley, and to bring down every mountain and hill, and to make the crooked straight, and the rough wayes smooth; And so verse 6. by the valleys is to be understood of such as whose hearts were possessed with fear, either of Gods displeasure against them for sin; or fear of the dangers, straits, and difficulties, that attends the Gospel of Christ, in the true profession of the same. From both which the hearts of such are to be freed, that are fit to follow Christ, and prepared subjects for his Kingdome, *Luk. 14. 26.* In which sense the Gospel is a preparative meane to fill up such valleys, by powring in the great abundance of Gods rich grace, and free love in Christ towards all such as beleve, and his all-sufficieny to preserve such as suffer for his Names sake. And for laying low the mountains and hills, that is, to humble and to bring downe the proud heart of man, that exalts himselfe, and cannot submit unto the simplicitie of the Gospel, and to that low and meane condition of Christ upon his Crosse, as *1/a. 2. 11--22* with *2 Cor. 10. 4. 5. 6.* And for the crooked to be made straight, that is, the crooked and Serpent-like nature, wayes and evill dispositions of men, these shall be changed, and made conformable to Christ. And so for the making of the rough smooth, that is, the hard and rough turbulent spirits of men, that will admit of no rule, order, or peaceable societie at all, shall by the word of God be made soft, smooth, and of such a meek temper of spirit, as that all such shall live together in love, innocent and harmlesse, with unity, peace, and uniformitie to Christ in all things, as *1/a. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.* All which Christ himselfe often affirmed, that *except a man deny himselfe, he cannot be his disciple.* All which change thus upon the hearts of men, is by the power of the Word of God, by which they as matter are fitted and prepared for the forme.

The second constituting cause, is the confession of faith, which declares the fitnessse of the matter for the forme; which confession of faith is produced by the power of the Gospel, shining into the heart of man, and draws away the same after that which is by the Gospel revealed. Which truth is of such a working nature, that will not be kept in, but like unto leaven which so seasons and sweetens the whole man, that as fire at length it breaks forth and discovers it selfe, or rather such as have it, & not onely so, but it brings them together, by which they come now to confesse about the same, so that at length they come to be of one and the same minde and judgement in it, and withall convicted of their obedience therunto, and upon this here follows a third constituting cause, which is their free & mutuall consent and agreement upon the practise of that truth, so by God revealed, and by faith received as his will in their obedience therunto; which agreement is between God and them in his truth, who by his power subjects



them to himselfe by the same; and where this is in truth. Now comes the cause in the last place, which effects and concludes the whole work, and that is the Spirit of grace and power, going forth in their hearts by faith, uniting & knitting them up together in one, for the manifestation of their obedience to God, in their practical subjection to Christ in the said truth, by them received and agreed upon as aforesaid, and this is the Covenant that formes the Church, which ever goes in order before the externall administration of any other ordinance; then the manners joyning together for orderly practise; for persons must be informed of the truth in judgement; and bound by the same in conscience, and agree upon the practise, before the same can orderly be put into execution; which foresaid union is the holy Ghosts conjoyning and uniting the said persons together in one and the same truth, and so consequently into an orderly body among themselves, immediately under Christ their head. Which conjunction is called in Scripture the unitie of the Spirit, Eph. 4. 3. and the gracious covenant, by which God becomes their God, and they his approved people in such a visible relation, Gen. 17. as Deut. 10. 12, 13 with Deut. 26. 17, 18. Exek. 36. 8. Jer. 31. 3. This is called also a joyning to the Lord, as Jer. 50. 5. *They shall take the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us joyne our selves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. And the sonne of the stranger that joyns himselfe to the Lord, to serve him, and to love his name, and to be his servant, &c. Isa. 56. 6. And he that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. And of the rest darst we man joyne himselfe unto them, Act. 1. 13. And when Paul was come to Ierusalem, he assayed to joyne himselfe to the disciples, Act. 9. 26. And the whole body fitly joyned together, &c. Eph. 4. 16. And a fully framing of matter together for a house or habitation of God, as Eph. 2. 21, 22. All which is the Saints entering covenant with God, which covenant is their forme that gives them a being in such a relation or fellowship, 1 Jo. 4. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 9. And so much in briefe of the constitution of a Church, or of the Saints entering into Church-fellowship, and the causes producing the same.*

And now being come into her own land, as of old was signified, Exek. 36. 24, 25. which is, into a visible covenant with God, or union with Christ, and so become his own, there is now to be washed with water in Baptisme, as Exek. 36. 25. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 4. 5. And thus being in covenant with God by faith in Jesus Christ, in which their state consists, and so the agreement made, & the covenant passed between them, now the scale is set, which is the outward ordinance of Baptisme, to confirme the same, which being done, there is then to enter upon her holy communion in all the rest of Gods holy ordinances thereunto belonging, for her comfort and well-being.

And thus I have by Gods gracious assistance done with this subject charged upon me, partly by such as feare the Lord in a far Country beyond the Seas; and partly by my own conscience for the truths sake at home. And good Reader, consider well before you judge, and what I see not, teach thou me, &c. Job 34. 32. But let not my unwearie Reader be offended with me, though I speake a word or two more.

*It may be some will aske me, if I condemne all Churches, but onely such as I have here described.*

To which I answer, that I condemne no Church, which God approves of in his word: secondly, I condemne no Church at all; for I goe not about to shew who are false, but what is true; and it is enough for me, if such a Church as hath been spoken of be granted to be true, and let all others alone, to stand and fall to their own Master; and in regard of those reproachfull clamours, cast upon all without exception, that seem to be of my judgement about Baptisme, I shall yet make bold with my Reader, briefly to declare a word of my faith, what I beleeve and hold to be truth, and desire to practise the same, and so leave all to God, & for the godly Reader to judge, what difference there is between him and me, in the maine; that men should be so incensed against me, as to seeke my life, as some have done, the Lord in mercy forgive them, and lay it upon their charge. And now for my faith.

First, I doe beleeve, that there is onely one God, who is distinguished in three persons, God the Father; God the Sonne, and God the holy Ghost; yet but one in nature, or essence, without division, and uncommunicable, who made the world, and all things therein, by the word of his power, and governes them all by his wise providence.

Secondly, I beleeve that God made man in his own Image, an upright and a perfect creature, consisting of soule and body: which body God framed of the earth, and breathed a soule into the same. To whom God gave a law, upon his keeping of which depended all his happinesse; and upon the contrary attended his misery, which soon took effect; for he breaking that Law, he fell under the curse, and the wrath of God lay upon him & all his posterity. By which fall, Man lost the knowledge of God, & utterly disabled himself of all ability ever to recover the same againe.

Thirdly, I beleeve God out of the counsell of his own will, did before he made the world, elect and choofe some certain number of his foreseen fallen creatures, and appointed them to eternal life in his Sonne, for the glory of his grace: which number so elected, shall unavoidably be saved, and come to glory, and the rest left to themselves, in their sinne, to glorifie his justice.

Fourthly, I beleeve that God in the fulnesse of his owne time, did send his Sonne, the second person, who in the wombe of the Virgin Mary, assumed mans nature, and in the same he suffered death upon the Crosse, onely as he was man, to satisfie his Fathers justice, for the finnes of all his elect, and them onely, and that he lay three dayes & three nights in his grave, from whence he arose the third day by the power of his Godhead, for the justification of all for whose finnes he dyed; and that in the same body Christ dyed, he arose from the dead, and afterwards ascended into heaven, the place of glory, where he was before, and there to remaine untill he comes at the last day to judge the world in high counsell.

Fifthly, I beleeve that God of his grace, in his own time, effectually calls such as shall be saved to the knowledg

five, as a child in the parents begetting of it; and so God by his Spirit works faith in the hearts of all such to beleeve in Christ, and his righteousness only for justification. And thus they are made righteous before God in Christ, and so comfortable to the will of the Father through the Sonne; and also made holy through the worke of regeneration, and the holy Spirit of grace dwelling in them; yet all such have still as long as they live here in the flesh remaining in them, an old man, that original corruption, the flesh that warres against the Spirit, which hinders them in their obedience both to God and man; and many times draws them to that which is evill, and contrary to their intentions; yet all of them shall through Christ overcome, and safely be brought to glory at last.

Sixthly, I beleeve the holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and have the onely authoritie to binde the conscience to the obedience of all therein contained, and are the allsufficient Rule by the Spirit of God, to guide a man in all his obedience both to God and man.

Seventhly, As for the absence of originall sin, and power in the will to receive and refuse grace and salvation generally offered by the Gospel, and Christs dying for all persons universally, to take away sinne, that stood between them and salvation, and so laid downe his life a rancome for all without exception, and for such as have been once in Gods love, so as approved of by him in Christ for salvation, and in the covenant of grace, and for such to fall so as to be damned eternally, and all of the like nature, I doe beleeve is a doctrine from beneath, and not from above, and the teachers of it from Satan, and not from God, and to be rejected as such that oppose Christ and his Gospel.

Eighthly, I doe beleeve the resurrection of the dead, that all shall rise and come to judgement, and every one give account of himselfe to God, and receive according to the things done in their bodies, whether they be good or bad; therefore no conscience ought to be forced in the matters of Religion, because no man can beare out another in his account to God, if in case he should cause him to sinne.

Ninthly, I doe beleeve the King is set upon his throne by God, who hath given him power and authority to reigne and rule for God over all his subjects, as supreme head over all persons in his Dominions; in whom is resident all power to punish any that shall offend either against his royall person, crowne, or dignity, and that all his Subjects are to obey him out of conscience to God, and all in lawfull authoritie under him; and wherein they rule well, I am bound in conscience actually to obey and assist them to the utmost of my abilitie, both in my person and state; and wherein they goe amisse, that I cannot with a good conscience, actually obey them as aforesaid, I shall passively submit my body to suffer their pleasure (according to the Word of God) in what they shall inflict upon me without resistance: this is my faith, and the faith of all that I desire to have fellowship with.

And lastly, I doe beleeve that there is an holy and blessed communion of Saints, that God of his grace calls such as belong to life by election, unto the fellowship of his Sonne by the Gospell, of which matter, God by his Word and Spirit joyns them together in his covenant of grace, and so constitutes his Church; as I have before shewed: And as God hath thus built for himselfe an holy habitation of such pure matter, and also after a holy manner, even so hath he provided a way of preservation and safetie for the same; as *1sa. 26. 1. We have a strong Citie, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks: which Citie is said to have a wall both great and high, and built upon twelve foundations, great that none shall break through, & high, that none shall overtop or get over, and strong in the foundation, that nothing shall shake it; and God hath said, that he will be a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of it, and that he will keepe it, and watch over it by night and by day, that nothing shall hurt it; and as God hath built himselfe a house after his own minde, and is a guard to the same; even so he also is said to beautifie the same with salvation, and to make the place of his feet glorious, and that he will lay all her stones with faire colours, and her foundations with Saphires, and her windows of Agates, and her gates of Carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones, and all her children taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of her children. Which Citie and the streets thereof are said to be of pure gold like unto cleare glasse, whose light is like to a stone most precious, even as a Jasper stone, cleare as Crystall. Of which Christ saith, *Thou art all faire my love, and there is no spot in thee; and that the Kings daughter is all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold.**

And as Christ doth thus signifie unto us the nature of his Church, both in respect of her matter, her forme, her grace and comely order in him her head; even so he holds forth his love to her, and delight in her, by these and the like sweet expressions of comfort and solace. *The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation, saying, this is my rest, and here will I dwell for ever. And so saith the Apostle, In Christ all the building firly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom you are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit: and therefore God is said to love the gates of Zion more then all the dwellings of Jacob: and glorious things are spoken of her, O thou Citie of God. Which Citie is said to be Jerusalem which is above, he is the mother of us all. And so the mountain of the Lords house is said to be established in the top of the mountains, and to be exalted above the hills. For whose sake saith the Lord, I will not hold my peace, nor rest, untill I cause the righteousnesse thereof to break forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And so called by Christ an holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; a City sought out, and not forsaken. The name of which Citie from that day shall be, The Lord is there. And further called his vine, his plant, his temple, his flocke, his pleasure portion, his first borne, his bride, his Queene, his Spouse, his wife, his body, his love, his dove, his onely joy, and place of Rest. Consider, some were perswaded with the things that were spoken, but some beleaved not, Act. 28. 24.*

ERRATA Faults escaped, Page 8. line 5. Read as for it, p. 1. 1. 4. t. therefore though the first, &c. p. 1. 9. 1. 5.

